

# Instilling Religious Values Through Songs in Forming Social Bonds at West Kalimantan State Middle Schools

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## Abstract

Instilling religious values is important to implement early, even during children's development and growth. Music, which has numerous benefits, can be an effective strategy in instilling those religious values. This research discusses the instillation of religious values implemented through singing activities using the "*Mars Gembira Bergerak*." The focus and data of the research were gathered at SMPN 2 Bengkayang, West Kalimantan. This song was created by the headmaster, who also has an interest and talent in the field of music. This research is descriptive and adopts a qualitative approach. Data were obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation of the song, which were transcribed to understand the lyrics and meaning of the song. The primary source is Mr. Marsel Marselius, the Headmaster and the song's creator. The triangulation technique was used to determine the educational strategy. The research results show that this song contains values of responsibility, enthusiasm, independence, creativity, and wisdom. It is important to sing while performing rhythmic movements so that this can lead to the creation of an interactive and enjoyable learning environment. Engaging social education will encourage active participation from students, fostering a sense of togetherness and strengthening social bonds among them. Through music, Islamic values such as the spirit of struggle, cooperation, and love for the homeland can be conveyed in a more engaging and easily understood manner by the students.

## Keywords

Middle School Education; Religious Values; Social Bonds; Songs

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The slogan "*SDM Unggul Bengkayang Mantap*" is a motto that inspires the community and holds great potential to be combined with noble religious values. The vision to create superior human resources aligns with Islamic teachings that encourage everyone to strive to become a better person. Sebastianus Darwis (2022) expressed that the spirit of cooperation and optimal coordination in realizing this slogan aligns with the values of brotherhood and cooperation taught in Islam. Furthermore, the emphasis on education as a means of character formation, as stated by Pujiono, has very important implications in Islamic education. Education is not only aimed at transferring knowledge but also at shaping noble character in students. By combining the local wisdom of Bengkayang and religious values, education in Bengkayang can become an inspiring model for other regions.

As an educational leader sensitive to cultural and spiritual values, Mr. Marsel Marselus created a



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musical work to instill student character values. His song is a work of art and a medium for integrating Islamic religious and local cultural values. This view is in line with previous research (Aumar et al., 2023; Indrayani & Suparmi, 2021; Yunus & Munira, 2021). This shows that music, especially regional music, has a large potential in shaping individual character and social values. Thus, the song "*Mars Gembira Bergerak*" is not only expected to evoke a spirit of nationalism and love for the homeland but also to serve as an effective medium for instilling values of faith, noble character, and tolerance in society. Through this song, it is hoped that students can grow into a generation of young people who are characterized, cultured, and faithful, who can make positive contributions to society and the nation.

Internal strategies are used, namely through habituation to activities that can actualize religious character (Suciati et al., 2023). Positive habituation, as referenced in the research (Hidayat et al., 2022), becomes an effective means to instill social, religious values or specially designed programs. This habituation begins with singing the song during every Monday ceremony. This is not only done at SMP Negeri 2 Bengkayang but is also implemented in schools in Bengkayang City. Preparation and planning in this matter are very necessary to comply with government regulations, school conditions, and the educators' (Nurhalimah, 2022; Sagala & Putra, 2024). Therefore, he also collaborated with the Head of the Education and Culture Office, Mr. Heru Pujiono, S.K.M., M.K.M., to realize the idea of creating the song. The collaboration resulted in the song, which can now be listened to on the YouTube platform. The strategy of learning through music, especially by incorporating audio-visual elements as in the song, is an effective approach in instilling character values in line with Islamic teachings (Jamil, 2022). Has emphasized that music can be a powerful medium for conveying educational messages. Through songs adapted with lyrics that are easy to remember and relevant to the lives of teenagers, we can indirectly instill values of faith, noble character, and love for the homeland. Internalizing these values aligns with the Islamic tarbiyah concept, education aimed at shaping a comprehensive Muslim personality. Thus, this song serves as entertainment and a means to bring students closer to their religious values.

The use of songs, especially those containing character-building lyrics, effectively instills social and religious values in children's minds from an early age. As emphasized by (Gani & Zulfahmi, 2021; Giardi et al., 2022), certain values can be internalized and manifest in daily behavior through songs. In the context of rapid digital transformation, as expressed by (Hanifah Salsabila et al., 2023; Sholeh, 2023; Zakaria, 2023), education also needs to adapt by utilizing technology to integrate cultural, social, and religious values. Using a qualitative approach, this research aims to delve deeper into how the song disseminated through YouTube can effectively instill religious values in the students of SMPN 2 Bengkayang. Through an in-depth analysis of the song's lyrics and direct observation of its implementation, this research will identify the strategies used and their impact on the social character formation of students, particularly in the context of Islamic values.

Character education, particularly in the context of religious values, has become a crucial issue in shaping a morally upright younger generation (Ramadhan et al., 2025). This research reveals an interesting innovation in instilling religious values through a song created by the Head Master. This is not just entertainment, but also a manifestation of efforts to integrate Islamic values with local wisdom. The lyrics of the song, rich with moral messages and positive values, align with the findings of (Ningsih, 2019; Sagala, 2024). This emphasizes the role of literacy in character formation. Furthermore, the integration of character values in this song aligns with the government's efforts to realize the Pancasila Student Profile, particularly the dimension of being faithful and devoted to God Almighty, and cooperation in singing together.

Previous research conducted shows that singing songs with religious meanings can enhance children's faith (Sumarni & Ali, 2020), emotional intelligence, and creativity, especially in toddlers (Yuliani et al., 2023). In addition, the religious character instilled in junior high school students is usually carried out through the habituation of spiritual activities (Adhani et al., 2023; Badry & Rahman, 2021), environmental love activities (Anggara et al., 2020), and innovative teaching methods (Rahmadayani et

al., 2023; Wulan Sari & Sumiyati, 2022). So far, little research has discussed efforts to instill religious values through songs among middle school students. Integrating songs into learning has created a deep emotional and social bond between students and religious values. Through its melodious tunes and inspiring lyrics, this song has become an effective means of instilling values of faith and noble character in the students' hearts. This aligns with the Islamic perspective that places character education as the main foundation in forming a comprehensive Muslim personality.

As emphasized by (Ladamay & Mustakim, 2023; Rapita et al., 2021) Character formation is a continuous process requiring consistent effort, including adolescence. By instilling social and religious values through music, this research aims to describe how students can develop good attitudes, control their desires, and build harmonious relationships with Allah SWT, fellow humans, and the universe. This research not only presents empirical evidence about the potential of march songs but also enriches the treasury of Islamic education by offering a new, engaging, and effective approach to shaping the younger generation, especially at the junior high school level.

## 2. METHODS

In line with the holistic goals of Islamic education, this research aims to uncover the potential of music art in shaping the religious personality of middle school children. Using a qualitative method based on quotes from (Batubara et al., 2021), the researchers analyze the relationship between how the song '*Mars Gembira Bergerak*' can serve as a means to instill religious values such as the spirit of brotherhood, tolerance, and love for the homeland in students. This research is classified as descriptive research to explain the efforts to instill religious values using the march song among junior high school students.

The collected research data includes observations, interviews, and documentation on instilling religious values through the school anthem. Observation was conducted during the flag ceremony on Monday, August 14, 2023, where the students of SMPN 2 Bengkayang always sing this march song. This observation resulted in the students appearing to collaborate while singing this song. They learn to align themselves with others, listen, and respond collectively. This experience fosters a sense of belonging and togetherness within the group. Interviews were conducted with primary sources. Marsel Marselus, an educator who is also a talented musician, is the primary source in this research. As the Principal, he deeply understands education dynamics at the school level. His great interest in singing has produced rich musical works, especially patriotic-themed songs like "*Bengkayang Damai*" and "*Indonesia Tangguh*". His diverse roles and interests provide a rich perspective in analyzing how music can be a tool to instill values of goodness in students.



**Figure 1.** Interview with Mr. Marsel Marselus  
(Documentation: Sagala 2023)

The data obtained will be further analyzed thoroughly using the Miles & Huberman model through data reduction, data presentation in sentences, and drawing conclusions rooted in the data. To ensure the validity and reliability of the findings, this study uses triangulation techniques by comparing data from interviews and documentation observations, thereby obtaining a comprehensive understanding of the implementation of religious value instillation through the Mars song.

### 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Music, as a universal language, plays a significant role in shaping the character and values of the younger generation. This research aims to identify and analyze the religious values contained in the lyrics and melodies of popular moving cheerful songs among the students of SMPN 2 Bengkayang, considering the potential of these songs to instill understanding and appreciation of religious values enjoyably way.

#### Findings

##### *The meaning of the Song Lyrics*

**MARS GEMBIRA BERGERAK**

Ciptaan : Marsel Marselius, S.Pd.  
Transkrip : Mastri Dihita Sagala, M.Pd.

**Moderato**

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**Figure 2.** Partiture of "Mars Gembira Bergerak"

The call of the Bengkayang Regent at the beginning of 2023 to integrate local wisdom values into the learning process, as expressed by (Pujiono, 2023), has become an inspiration for educators in Bengkayang Regency. One of the responses to that call was Mr. Marsel's initiative, who at the time served as the Head Master, to create a musical work that entertains and is rich in noble values. The song "Mars Gembira Bergerak," born from this creative process, is not just an ordinary song, but a manifestation of efforts to instill values of diversity, love for the homeland, and noble character in

students.

Figure 2 is a transcription of the song using staff notation conducted by the researcher. The song has an AB form, a simple yet effective melodic structure. This structure is marked by the repetition of section A with slight variations at the end of the phrase. This repetition pattern, known in music analysis as A', creates a familiar impression in listeners' ears, especially children. Research (Sakban & Sundawa, 2023) Highlights that the melodic intervals in this song are not too wide. This makes the song easy for children to sing and remember. The limited melodic intervals create a cheerful atmosphere, in line with the uplifting theme of the song.

Through semiotic analysis, researchers can identify the Islamic values implied in the song's lyrics, such as brotherhood, tolerance, fighting spirit, and love for fellow creatures of Allah SWT. The following table outlines these values. It refers to the total of outcomes, the result of data analysis. The results should be discussed for each. It covers how they can be interpreted from the perspective of the theories and studies. The findings and their implications should be addressed based on the context.

**Table 1.** Table of lyrics and meaning of the song "*Mars Gembira Bergerak*"

Lyrics	Meaning
Tunaikan tugas panggilan mulia	Noble Calling as a Divine Trust
Gigih dan bijak penuh inspirasi	Reflection on Noble Morals
Kuatkan tekad dan semangat diri	Implementation of Strong Faith
Berbudaya penuh daya cipta	Developing Potential as an Expression of Gratitude
Tekun belajar insan Pancasila	Implementation of Islamic Teachings on Seeking Knowledge
Smangat bergerak juga berbudaya	Actualization of Self-Potential within the Framework of Islam and Preserving Cultural Heritage and Noble Values
Menuju masa depan yang cemerlang	The Noble Aspirations of a Muslim
Generasi muda harapan bangsa	Aspirations that are Measured Not Only in Material Terms but Also Spiritually
Bangga sekolahku, pelajar kuat	Determination to Become a Strong Student
Wujudkan cita-cita yang luhur	Driven by Faith for Life in This World and the Hereafter
Gembira bergerak itu semoboyan kita	Change to Become Better

### ***Instilling Religious Values***

This research reveals the mechanism of internalizing religious values through music art, specifically the "*Mars Gembira Bergerak*" song. Through a qualitative approach, it was found that the song lyrics, rich in positive messages, gradually shape the students' character, in line with the holistic goals of Islamic education (Sauri, Gunara, Sanusi, et al., 2022). The selection of the march song as a medium for character value education is based on its simple melody, which allows students to memorize and sing it easily. Gutama (2020) explains that the cheerful and spirited rhythm entertains and stimulates learning motivation, in line with the spirit of curiosity encouraged in Islam.

The process of internalizing noble values through the art of music, particularly the song "*Mars Gembira Bergerak*," has been systematically implemented at school. With a learning method involving imitation and repeated practice, students memorize the song's lyrics and absorb the values. This learning approach aligns with the concept of ta'lim in Islam, which is the process of transferring knowledge that is not only cognitive but also affective and psychomotor.

Mr. Marselus's initiative in creating the song was driven by the awareness of the importance of character education in facing the challenges of globalization. He sees the Merdeka curriculum as a golden opportunity to instill noble values, including religious values, from an early age. By making music a learning medium, He hopes to instill a sense of religious devotion and nationalism in the students. Research (Young et al., 2016) Has been shown that repetition in singing songs can help individuals memorize the lyrics and internalize the moral messages contained within them. Thus, the policy of singing this anthem at every flag ceremony is a strategic step to instill character values effectively.

### ***Implications for the World of Education***

The results of this research have broad implications for the world of education, particularly in the context of developing religious character. Songs as a medium for instilling religious values have had a positive influence. This song adds to the repertoire of educational-themed songs and effectively instills Islamic religious values such as responsibility, enthusiasm, independence, creativity, and wisdom. In-depth analysis of the song's lyrics shows alignment with the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project, particularly in the dimension of being devout to God Almighty. This program is based on multidisciplinary learning to address global challenges (Irawati et al., 2022). This innovation shows great potential in integrating the art of music with religious values and making a tangible contribution to realizing the expected student profile for the generation of Bengkayang Regency.

From an Islamic perspective, happiness is a gift from Allah SWT that should be appreciated. The happiness felt in the learning process is not solely related to academic achievements, but also encompasses inner peace, heart satisfaction, and closeness to the Creator. Recent studies, such as those conducted by (Azizah et al., 2019; Hurriyati et al., 2022; Islamiah & Rif'an, 2023; Puspita, 2019). It has consistently shown that a pleasant learning atmosphere can enhance the quality of education and the well-being of students.

Movement, as expressed in the title and lyrics of this song, is not merely a physical activity. Movement can be interpreted as change, where change is dynamic and inevitable. Everyone, including students, must be able to adapt to the changes that occur, whether in terms of position, attitude, or perspective. These adaptation skills will help students face life's challenges more effectively and efficiently. I see that the song's title contains the word "movement," related to the "*Sekolah Penggerak*" program currently being implemented by the Indonesian Ministry of Education. The driving school focuses on achieving comprehensive learning outcomes encompassing competence and character, starting with superior human resources.

The lyrics of songs that inspire a fighting spirit and creativity are not just entertainment, but also have great potential as a tool to instill religious values and shape the character of students. In the context of Islamic education, such songs can serve as an effective medium to integrate values of faith, noble character, and love for the homeland (Mastur et al., 2022; Sauri, Gunara, & Cipta, 2022). The lyrics of a song that contains a fighting spirit can serve as a reminder of the importance of *jihad fi sabilillah* in a broad sense, which is the struggle to improve oneself and contribute positively to society. In addition, the call to cultivate a culture full of creativity aligns with Islamic teachings that encourage its followers to learn and develop their potential continuously. Thus, this song can enhance students' learning motivation and shape resilient, creative, and noble character. Furthermore, the values contained in this song can foster a sense of social responsibility and encourage students to become good citizens who are beneficial to their surroundings.

### **Discussion**

An opening verse that reads "*Tunaikan tugas panggilan mulia*" emphasizes the importance of wisdom in education, in line with the noble values taught in Islam. The concept of wisdom in Islam is known as hikmah. The Qur'an and Hadith often praise knowledgeable and wise individuals. Allah SWT

says in Surah Al-Baqarah verse 269: "*Allah memberikan hikmah kepada siapa yang Dia kehendaki. Dan barang siapa yang diberi hikmah, ia telah diberi kebaikan yang banyak. Dan tiada yang dapat mengambil pelajaran kecuali orang-orang yang berakal*" or Allah gives wisdom to whom He wills. And whoever is given wisdom has certainly been given much good. And none will remember except those of understanding. In line with the thinking of (Putra & Supanggah, 2018) Those who define wisdom as concrete actions by norms.

### ***The strategic role of songs in religious social education***

The proposed strategy to enhance the religious aspects of middle school students is strongly aligned with Islamic values. The Qur'an and Hadith encourage Muslims always to think creatively and innovatively. For example, the command to "think" (Al-Baqarah: 164) shows that Islam highly values the ability to think critically and analytically. Moreover, the stories of the prophets and companions in the Qur'an present many examples of individuals who are creative and innovative in solving problems. Creativity, the ability to generate original ideas, solve problems, and adapt to changes, can manifest a person's faith (Arnidha & Fatahillah, 2021; Iswantiningtyas et al., 2023). Creative individuals can see potential in everything, including difficult situations. This attitude is in line with Islamic teachings, which encourage its followers always to be optimistic and believe in the power of Allah. According to Dirlanudin, creativity refers to a new ambition in the courage to innovate. In line with that, Djafri et al. explain that responsibility arises when they innovate, meaning there is a possibility of negative consequences, but that person dares to take risks.

Success comes from the determination and self-spiritedness of an individual (Tambunan, 2021). Like in the lyrics "*Tunaikan tekad dan semangat diri*", it means that the fighting spirit embedded in a person manifests strong faith. In Islam, faith is defined as a firm belief in Allah SWT, the Day of Judgment, angels, the books of Allah, the prophets, and divine decree and predestination. A strong faith will encourage someone to strive diligently to achieve their life goals in this world and the hereafter. This is also reflected in the behavior of students who not only start lessons with prayer but also behave according to religious norms in everyday life.

### ***Formation of social bonds through singing activities***

The use of regional songs as a medium for character education, especially the Mars songs rooted in Dayak culture, has significant implications. In addition to instilling a love for local culture, this song can also serve as a means to strengthen religious values (Marini et al., 2019; Wibawa & Awaliah, 2023). Have emphasized that the customs and arts of a culture contain noble values that can serve as the foundation of an individual's character. In the context of Islam, noble values such as tolerance, cooperation, and respect for parents are highly taught. Thus, preserving Dayak culture also means preserving universal values taught in Islam. The message of tolerance in the Mars song aligns with Islamic teachings that uphold the values of brotherhood and harmony among religious communities. In the Qur'an, Allah SWT says, "*Wahai manusia, sesungguhnya Kami telah menciptakan kamu dari seorang laki-laki dan seorang perempuan dan menjadikan kamu berbangsa-bangsa dan bersuku-suku supaya kamu saling kenal-mengenal. Sesungguhnya orang yang paling mulia di sisi Allah ialah orang yang paling taqwa di antara kamu.*" or O mankind, indeed We have created you from a male and a female and made you into nations and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble among you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you" (Al-Hujurat: 13). This verse emphasizes that differences in ethnicity, nationality, and culture do not become obstacles to mutual respect and cooperation.

### ***The Role of Teachers in Facilitating the Formation of Social Bonds Through Songs***

Teachers play an important role in the character development process of students. Based on the interview results, teachers also guide singing practice, such as memorizing melodies and song lyrics (Marsel, 2023). In line with the research conducted (Badry & Rahman, 2021; Yasinta et al., 2022), teachers impart knowledge and serve as examples in instilling religious values and social culture in students. Furthermore, teachers play a role in encouraging collaboration among students during practice and

performance of songs, fostering a sense of mutual respect and positive interdependence in achieving common goals. Discussions led by the teacher after the singing session also serve as an important platform to reflect on the religious values contained in the songs and relate them to the students' social experiences in the school environment, thereby strengthening the emotional and spiritual bonds among them.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This research offers a new perspective in the field of education, particularly in the context of instilling religious values. By analyzing the song, this research innovatively reveals the potential of music as an effective medium for shaping spirituality in the school environment. The lyrics of the song, which are rich in religious messages, not only align with the vision of Indonesian education but also resonate with the values of the Qur'an and Hadith, which teach the importance of noble character. Additionally, this research demonstrates how a school leader and teacher support can serve as role models in instilling religious values in students through the art they create. In-depth analysis of the song memorization training process shows a strong correlation between the moral message of the song and the character development of students as social beings through singing together. This aligns with the Islamic tarbiyah concept, which aims to shape a comprehensive Muslim personality. In addition, this research also highlights the importance of integrating knowledge and religious values into the learning process. The implications of this research highlight the opportunity to compose rhythmic movements that align with the song's rhythm, allowing students to collaborate in singing the song harmoniously.

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