IMPLEMENTATION OF RELIGIOUS CHARACTER EDUCATION THROUGH THE FRIDAY FAITH PROGRAM

Muhammad Arsad¹, Musthofa²
¹²Universitas Islam Negeri Walisongo Semarang; Indonesia
Email: arsad.1803016015@student.walisongo.ac.id

Abstract: This research aims to discuss the implementation of religious character education through the Friday Faith program along with the supporting and inhibiting factors at SMA Negeri 1 Budong-Budong, West Sulawesi. The research method used in this research is a descriptive qualitative research method, while the data collection techniques used are observation, interviews, and documentation. Data analysis in this research is done by collecting data, reducing data, presenting data, and drawing conclusions or verification. The results of this research show that the implementation of religious character education at SMA Negeri 1 Budong-Budong is going well and is filled with several sessions such as the reading of prayers (tahlil) or istighosah, reading juz 30 in groups, reading asmaul husna, and tausiyah. Because of this, several positive values emerged. Some of the supporting factors include the enthusiasm of teachers and students in participating in Friday Faith activities, adequate facilities, and optimal time management, while the inhibiting factors are lack of care from parents, the community environment, excessive use of smartphones, and the students' own backgrounds.

Keywords: Friday Faith, Religious Character, Character Education, SMA Negeri 1 Budong-Budong West Sulawesi

INTRODUCTION

Education is a very important thing in life, so that human life runs by having quality human resources. In the formulation of Article 3 of Law Number 20 of 2003, it is also stated that the existence of a national education system has a function as a forum for developing students' abilities in the process of character formation to realize the ideals of a civilized, dignified nation and to make the nation's life intelligent (Ministry of National Education, 2010).

Strengthening the field of character education is a big and important concern so that human resources are better and of higher quality so that students can have good character and can respect the noble values of their own nation through formal and non-formal education (Fatimah & Usman, 2017). In the current era of modernization, we can see that there is a gap in behavior that is starting to forget ethics, morals, and other norms, one of which is the phenomenon of moral decline among students, such as juvenile delinquency, brawls between students, even free sex (Heri Cahyono, 2016), this is not justified by the norms that apply in society which in fact has politeness and religious values. This is where the role of the school is needed to be a shield and a forum for students so that the function of education can be achieved, so it is able to develop all the abilities of students with noble moral character (Ega Nasrudin et al., 2023). According to (Samani and Hariyanto, 2012), character education is a process where students are given demands to become complete human beings who have character both physically and mentally. Not only that, character education is not only about transferring knowledge but also how to put it into practice in everyday life so that life is balanced. For example, the relationship with God and relationships with fellow humans can run well so that, in the end,
students can harmonize both of them well because it covers not only cognitive aspects but also psychomotor and affective aspects (Rodli Makmun, 2014). With this character education, students have noble morals in the family and in society because it opens the door as wide as possible so that students not only learn cognitively but also learn skills, especially attitudes (Ajmin & Marzuki, 2019). Therefore, in this case, the government optimizes so that schools can provide action by integrating it into the character values of students (Siswanti, Utomo, & Muntholib, 2018).

Starting from this, a school needs to instill a religious character in the school, remembering that Indonesia is a country that has the principle of God. With this religious character, a student will have religious habits so that when he wants to do something outside the rules of religious or societal norms, he can have a strong fortress because he always remembers God. In this case, the character-building construct also states that the religious dimension is very important to develop because it is the main stronghold for a child to have a religious character (Lyna Dwi and Zeni, 2020; Idhar (2020). In his opinion he also states that religious and character education can play an important role in shaping individual attitudes, values, and behavior. It can also help overcome moral degradation and provide the basis for a meaningful and responsible life in society.

According to the Language Center of the Ministry of National Education, the word religious means being devout to religion and pious. Religion is the attitude and behavior of a religious person to always fulfill His teachings and abandon His prohibitions. So, the religious character is an attitude and behavior that, in practice, is to carry out religious teachings according to what one adheres to, have a sense of tolerance for other religions, and live in harmony with friends who adhere to other religions (Big Indonesian Dictionary, 2008). Not only that, character education is not only about transferring knowledge but also about how to put it into practice in everyday life so that a balanced life, namely between the relationship with God and relationships with fellow humans, can run well so that both can work in balance (Riyadi Santoso, 2017). However, (2008) also believes that, in fact, the word religious does not only express its relationship with religion. In this case, diversity is closer to this meaning because this aspect is always inherent in a person and his conscience.

Friday Faith is one of the programs at SMA Negeri 1 Budong-Budong, West Sulawesi. Together with the Clean Friday and Healthy Friday programs, it is important to improve the quality and implementation of religious character, which is carried out through spiritual activities such as da’wah or religious lectures or in the form of recitations. In realizing the formation of student character, the application of religious character, especially Islam, is very strategic, especially at the high school level, considering that high school is a transition period from adolescence to adulthood where more attention must be paid to religious strengthening.

SMA Negeri 1 Budong-Budong, West Sulawesi, is one of the high schools located on Jalan Pelaksanaan Babana, Babana, Budong-Budong District, Central Mamuju Regency, West Sulawesi Province, Indonesia, with accreditation A. As is known, State High Schools are public schools where not all of the students have a significant background in the implementation of the Islamic religion compared to students who previously studied in Islamic religious-based schools.
Therefore, both habits and behavior in high school are very diverse. Therefore, to instill a religious character in students, the school makes efforts through these Friday faith activities. The basis for implementing this activity is the school’s vision, namely empowering the school’s potential efficiently and effectively to create quality Human Resources (HR). Not only that, this activity is also based on Law Article 3 Number 20 of 2003, which states that it is necessary to develop the potential of students to become human beings who have faith and are devoted to God Almighty, have noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens.

According to the Ministry of National Education (2010), it is defined as education that can develop and instill national character in the heart of students at the school so that they have strong character and good values and always practice the values of life, especially morals, within themselves, the environment, the homeland and the nation as a good citizen, upholds religious values, has the principles of nationalism, is active, productive, innovative and creative. Then, according to Lickona (2013), character education is a serious activity that helps someone better understand, examine, and have empathy when taking actions based on the core of ethical values. Character is an important part of the fundamental aspects of human social life. Therefore, children must experience the implementation of character education from an early age in the family environment supported by educational institutions, which have a big responsibility in the process of growth and development of morality inside a child.

In 2022, Ulil Amri et al. presented research related to religious character education with the result that achievement of implementation profile competency was carried out by strengthening the implementation of religious character in the form of faith and devotion to God Almighty using various methods typical of Islamic boarding schools which become the character in it (Ulil Amri Syafri et al., 2022). Furthermore, research by Hamidah Ulfah et al. in 2021 stated that the implementation of character strengthening in students is through habituation, application, learning, and regulations (Hamidah Ulfah et al., 2021). Then, research conducted by Dian Popi et al. in 2019 stated that Islamic boarding schools are a good and optimal place to instill religious character through daily activities and independent character, which is instilled through entrepreneurial activities (Dian Popi, 2019). Furthermore, Merja Erlanda et al. also conducted research related to religious character education in 2021. The results were that character education could be implemented through routine activities (Merja Erlanda et al., 2021). Then, research conducted by Annek Asri et al. in 2019 also concluded that several programs could support religious character education in schools, such as extracurricular curricular activities and school culture (Annek Asri et al., 2019). From these several studies, there has been no research that discusses specific activities whose focus is to develop the religious character education of students in high schools, which, in fact, are general high schools where diversity exists within them with the main aim being to also prepare students to become part of human resources (quality human resources).

This research focuses on how religious character education is implemented through Friday of Faith activities at SMA Negeri 1 Budong-Budong, West Sulawesi, and what factors are supporting and inhibiting factors in these Friday of Faith activities. The benefit of this research is
to understand the implementation of religious character education directly through Friday Faith activities along with supporting and inhibiting factors in these activities at SMA Negeri 1 Budong-Budong.

**METHOD**

This type of research is qualitative with a case study research approach. In this case, the researcher explained: "Implementation of Religious Character Education through the Faithful Friday Program." This research data is in the form of data regarding the implementation of religious character education through the Faithful Friday program, namely descriptive data that describes the results of observations, interviews, and documentation. The data collection techniques in this research are (1) Observation, which was carried out from 1 May 2023 to 29 May 2023 at SMA Negeri 1 Budong-Budong, West Sulawesi; (2) Interview, which was conducted directly with the principal and deputy principal student affairs section, PAI subject teachers and students at SMA Negeri 1 Budong-Budong, West Sulawesi, (3) Documentation, carried out by taking photos. The data analysis technique used is to reduce data related to the implementation of religious character education through the Friday Faith program at SMA Negeri 1 Budong-Budong, West Sulawesi. Then, the researchers presented the data in the form of tables and short descriptions and drew conclusions. In terms of drawing conclusions, the researcher carried out critical analysis and conclusions on data related to the implementation of religious character education through the Friday Faith program with relevant theories or discourses. Furthermore, researchers also compared it with several related studies.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Results**

**Results of the Implementation of Religious Character Education through the Faithful Friday Program**

The following are the results of the implementation of religious character education through the Friday Faith program at SMA Negeri 1 Budong-Budong, West Sulawesi:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Planning</th>
<th>Forms of activity</th>
<th>Supporting factors</th>
<th>Inhibiting factor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. | To ask for safety yesterday, today, and tomorrow | Prayer together 
( *Tahlil, istighosah* ) | The enthusiasm that teachers and students have | Lack of attention from parents |
| 2. | To get close to the *Qur’an*, you can even memorize it, even if it’s only one juz | Read Juz 30 
( *QS. An-Naba - An-Nas* ) in groups | The enthusiasm that teachers and students have | Public environment |
| 3. | To bring students and teachers closer to God’s good names | Reading Asmaul Husna | Facilities are adequate or well-fulfilled | Excessive cell phone use |
| 4. | To gain new knowledge, always remember Allah, open your mind to new things | Tausiyah by *ustadz* or *ustadzah* | Time is limited but still optimal | Student background |

Table 1. Implementation of Religious Character Education through the Faithful Friday Program
In this Friday of Faith activity, students are directed to follow a series of planning activities, such as Asking for safety yesterday, today, and the day after. The Friday of Faith activity at the high school held a joint prayer complete with the reading of tahlil and istighosah for 25 minutes, led by the picket teacher in the Friday of Faith activity. This is, of course, based on enthusiasm from both teachers and students who, in fact, are the targets of this Friday of Faith activity. However, due to the existence of several internal and external religious organizations adhered to by both students and their parents or fanatics, there is a clear gap. There are some parents who do not allow their children to take part in tahlil and istighosah activities because they think it is not in line with their sect or beliefs. This is a concern for the school because, basically, this activity is a bridge for students to become more familiar with inner peace so that when they worship or recite certain lafadz (word), they will feel close to Allah, and there is a side to how calm worship can be when you feel calm. The evaluation continued, and finally, a decision was made that in joint prayer activities, it was not specific to carry out only tahlil and istighosah but more generally, namely joint prayer without leaning towards certain organizations (Syaifuddin, Interview results, 8 May 2023 at 09.00 WITA at SMA Negeri 1 Budong-Budong, West Sulawesi). Then, to make students close to the Qur’an, they are even expected to be able to memorize it, even if it is only juz 30 or short suras. The activity of reading juz 30 is carried out, starting from Q.S. An-Naba to Q.S An-Nas. In this case, the enthusiasm of both teachers and students is also very visible. In fact, there are several students who have managed to memorize juz 30 because they often take part in this activity and are never absent from Friday of Faith activities. This is, of course, a special concern for the school and opens up glory because SMA Negeri 1 Budong-Budong, which, in fact, is a public school, can have students who can memorize the Qur’an even though it is only in juz 30, this advantage can be a highlight of its value add to the school. However, currently, there is a significant inhibiting factor, namely the lack of support from the surrounding community, which, in fact, assumes that the school is not a religious school that requires children to memorize the Qur’an. The assumptions that are circulating outside are the assumptions of the community, which do not have the correct information. Therefore, the school also provides education in the form of understanding to the community through the parents of students in the surrounding school so that they do not conclude news that is not true or invalid by inserting or introducing leading programs at the school during committee meetings or student parent meetings (Aminuddin, Interview Results, 11 May 2023 at 08.00 WITA at SMA Negeri 1 Budong-Budong, West Sulawesi). Furthermore, to introduce and bring students and teachers closer to the good names of Allah, the school holds Friday Faith activities by filling in activities in the form of reading the Asmaul Husna together led by one of the students or students based on the approved weekly schedule and determined by the school which is coordinated by the teacher who teaches Islamic Religious Education (PAI) subjects in carrying out the Friday of Faith activities. The Asmaul Husna is sung very compactly and has its own characteristics with the aim that students can feel solemnity in reading it. Of course, this is facilitated well by the school and makes students comfortable when carrying out this Friday of Faith activities at the school. However, the freedom to use cellphones makes the situation seem to reduce the solemnity of reciting the Asmaul Husna. It was found that there were several students who were still indifferent when reading Asmaul Husna because they
were busy playing with their gadgets in secret. The results of the evaluation from the organizers of the Friday Faith activities provided a solution in the form of students' cell phones being collected by class and collected by the coordinator of each class in a place provided by the school so that the activity was comfortable and did not disturb each other (Amiruddin, Interview results, 12 May 2023 at 09.00 WITA at SMA Negeri 1 Budong-Budong, West Sulawesi).

Discussion

Implementation of Religious Character Education through Faith Fridays

Implementing religious character education through Fridays of Faith is an activity that can also be recommended for other schools, especially in high schools in the general category, because this character education is very necessary considering the existence of character, ethics, and moral values that must be maintained and developed. Through schools, it is a product and a moral paradigm in Islam itself (Khoirul Anwar et al., 2019). However, regardless of the existing opinions, the implementation of religious character education in each educational institution will definitely encounter obstacles and challenges, and the solutions will not be the same (Ahmad Salim, 2015).

As is the opinion of Thomas Lickona in his book entitled "Educating for Character," there is a flashback story that character or moral education actually already existed and was in line and intersected with the nature of education itself on the basis of the aim of education to guide the younger generation to become a good generation, intelligent, morally tolerant, cooperative and has virtuous behavior because the character inherent in a person is an eternal value that can be supported by the role of school institutions (Lickona, 2012). Furthermore, according to Thomas Lickona, in everyday life, character education has two groups, namely the moral and non-moral parts. Related to morals are honesty, responsibility, and fairness (Prayitno & Manullang, 2011). In line with the implementation of character education, it will have a good impact because a good culture is also formed in the process. In essence, behavior that is carried out continuously will become a habit that is carried out in everyday life (Acetylena, 2008). In implementing character education, Thomas Lickona stated that there is a method for implementing character education in schools supported by the existence of a relationship between the school and the student's parents so that they work together in forming, building, and implementing character education, especially from an early age (Adpriyadi, 2018). This makes the current task as an educator and school responsible for character education. The important role of teachers' enthusiasm for religious activities that support religious character education is something that needs to be studied and implemented in more depth, considering that character is very important in building strong and quality human resources (HR) (Dewanto Zulkarnain, 2019), supported by the existence of Law Article 3 Number 20 of 2003 which states that one of the goals of character education in Indonesia is to make students ready to be molded into part of quality human resources (HR).

In the process, SMA Negeri 1 Budong-Budong West Sulawesi took steps by carrying out Friday faith activities such as group prayer accompanied by tahlil or istighosah, reading juz 30, reading asmaul husna, and tausiyah. The impacts that appear significant are: First, there is a strengthening of character in faith and devotion to God Almighty. This can be seen from the enthusiasm of teachers and students when taking part in Friday Faith activities at their school and can indicate that getting used to Friday Faith activities means raising awareness of the teachings
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of Islam directly or indirectly. When participating in this activity, it was also proven that there was
good feedback, solemnity, and no dirty words or inappropriate actions from the students. This is
in line with the opinion of Kholis (2017), which states that students who abandon bad behavior
that is not in accordance with religious regulations can fall into the category of faith that is starting
to be embedded and grow within students.

Second, there is a growing attitude of discipline. Students will automatically enter the hall
and place themselves according to their divisions; students will be grouped in the right row, and
female students will be grouped in the left row with the barriers provided. Likewise, when the
activity has entered the Juz 30 reading session, students will automatically be grouped based on
the divisions that have been coordinated by the teacher who teaches the subject of Islamic
Religious Education. The existence of this order is in line with the opinion of Rusijono & Khotimah
(2018), who stated that the existence of an orderly process for students to carry out activities in
a coherent manner without any coercion from any party is a show of discipline.

Third, there is strong tolerance. As is known, SMA Negeri 1 Budong-Budong West Sulawesi
is a public formal school because it has religious diversity, but this does not become an obstacle
in implementing religious character education at the school. Many of the facilities provided by
schools also accommodate religious activities other than Islam. This is in accordance with the
opinion of (Zakso et al., 2021) that tolerance is an attitude where opinions from different people
can be accepted well, not discriminating between one another based on race, ethnicity, or religion.
This wise attitude can keep away problems and divisions both individually and in social groups.

Fourth, the growth of character is based on trust. What is meant by trust here is how
students trust themselves and the tasks given by the teacher. Another example is when there are
students who have been scheduled to lead Friday of Faith activities, such as leading Asmaul Husna,
who are ready and alert to carry out their responsibilities without having to point fingers at each
other. This is also in accordance with the assumption (Herijanto, 2022) that trust is an attitude of
being safe, confident, and able to carry out what oneself or others entrust to it so that it is carried
out wholeheartedly, full of responsibility, and based on existing moral principles.

Then, several supporting factors were found, namely: (1) The enthusiasm of teachers and
students for the Friday of Faith activities. Time was limited but still optimal. This is in accordance
with the opinion of (Abdillah et al., 2020) that if character education is carried out correctly, it will
have a good effect on achievement due to the motivation that arises and increases so that the
character education provided has a significant influence, (2) The existence of adequate
infrastructure so that the Friday of Faith activities can run well and smoothly and as a sign that
the school has readiness for the Friday of Faith activities. The existence of infrastructure provided
by schools is a form of supporting character education, which is managed in such a way as to be a
good vehicle for the character formation of students therein (Ahmad Jaelani, 2019), (3) Optimizing
time. In this case, time is very important in this Friday of Faith activity because the time used is
approximately 45 minutes with the division into different sessions, and this means that it requires
good time management, namely the process of designing the use of time so that all planned
activities can be carried out in order to ensure that the required time is used maximally, efficiently
and productively so that the expected goals can be realized well (Antonius, 2014).
However, there are also factors that hinder this activity, namely: (1) Lack of attention from the student’s parents because there are several obstacles regarding the different beliefs they adhere to or the pros and cons of one of the sessions on the Friday of Faith activity. However, according to the opinion (2018), the existence of different theological schools in Islam is a reality that occurs in Muslim society, something that happens because these schools emerged when there were differences of opinion among previous Muslim figures. So, it is only natural that there are striking differences of opinion in this Friday of Faith activity, but these differences of opinion make the evaluation results further increase the high sense of tolerance within the Muslim community itself. Furthermore, the existence of disharmony with the surrounding community is also a major evaluation for the school so that the diversity within the school can be immediately overcome and respect each other well and this is in accordance with the statement from (Zakso et al., 2021) tolerance is the existence of an attitude of respect for differences so that problems do not arise and do not cause divisions either between individuals or groups. Then, the impact of the overuse of smartphones on students is also one of the obstacles to Friday Faith activities at this school. The reason is, according to (Dana Aswandi et al., 2019), excessive behavior in using a smartphone, a student must understand what is accessed on his smartphone and must not interfere with teaching and learning activities and not cause negative impacts because there are many examples of students whose concentration is disturbed because of so addicted to playing with my smartphone that they forget where they are and what they are doing. Then, the background of each student is also an obstacle that needs to be re-evaluated because, in the field, not all students are equipped with solid religious beliefs both in knowledge and practice and according to (Adiba et al., 2022), the background of the students has contributed more or less to the success of the Friday of Faith activities at SMA Negeri 1 Budong-Budong, West Sulawesi.

**CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of the research and discussion, it can be concluded that the implementation of religious character education through the Friday of Faith program at SMA Negeri 1 Budong-Budong, West Sulawesi was carried out in several sessions in the Friday of Faith activities, namely reading prayers (Tahlil or istighosah), reading juz 30 in groups, the reading of Asmaul Husna, and tausiyah is going well, giving rise to positive values in it, such as strengthening faith and devotion to Almighty God, a growing attitude of discipline, a high level of tolerance among students who adhere to various religions. Then, there are several supporting factors in this Friday of Faith activity, namely enthusiasm from teachers and students, adequate facilities, and optimal time management, while several inhibiting factors are lack of attention from parents, the community environment, excessive use of cellphones, and student background.
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Hasil wawancara dengan Dahlan pada 09 Mei 2023 pukul 12.30 WITA di SMA Negeri 1 Budong-Budong, Sulawesi Barat.


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