



Strengthening Students' Religious Character through Perkaju (Thursday Friday Camp Activities) at SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Sumberrejo

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ABSTRACT

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This research aims to explore the strengthening of students' religious character through Thursday-Friday Camp (Perkaju) activities at SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Sumberrejo. The program is designed to instill religious values, such as discipline, cooperation, responsibility, and religious observance through an interactive and practical approach. The research uses a qualitative approach with a case study method, involving interviews, observations, and documentation. The results of the study show that Perkaju is an effective medium in integrating religious values into students' lives through activities such as congregational prayers, Islamic studies, and habituation of noble morals. This program not only enhances students' relationship with God (hablum minallah) but also with fellow humans (hablum minannas). With a habituation and exemplary approach, the program succeeds in building students' religious character that is balanced between spiritual and social aspects.

KEYWORDS:

Strengthening
Religious Character,
Perkaju

I. INTRODUCTION

Education plays a crucial role in creating balance and perfection in the development of individuals and society. Not only does it function as a means to transfer knowledge and skills, education also plays an important role in shaping self-awareness, character, and instilling moral and spiritual values. Through the process of education, a nation is able to pass on religious teachings, culture, thoughts, and life skills to the next generation so that they are ready to face various challenges in the future (Nurkholis, 2013: 25).

One of the top priorities in education is character education. Character education has a strategic role in shaping a generation that is not only intellectually intelligent, but also noble. In the context of Islamic education, religious values and character education are inseparable. Islam emphasizes the importance of good morals, while character education aims to produce individuals with integrity, morality, and virtuous character. The combination of the two is expected to be able to form students who are scientifically superior and spiritually strong (Shodiq, 2018).

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The phenomenon of increasing disciplinary violations, student non-compliance, and the fading of religious character is an important signal of the need to strengthen spiritual and moral values in the school environment. Religious character includes a vertical relationship with God (hablum minallāh), as well as a horizontal relationship with fellow human beings (hablum minannās) and the environment. Integrated religious character education is expected to form students who not only carry out worship well, but also have social sensitivity, responsibility, and concern for the surrounding environment (Widodo, 2019).

Character education must be designed with a humane approach, emphasizing direct experience and habituation in daily life. The Ministry of Education and Culture (2018) stated that there are five main values in strengthening character education, and religious values are the main aspects that are the basis for forming religious behavior that reflects obedience to God Almighty, tolerance, and peaceful life in the midst of differences.

Religious character education does not only focus on the spiritual aspect, but also includes the development of the social character of learners. Its application in the school environment is realized through various religious activities that are carried out regularly and organized, such as the habit of praying, the implementation of congregational prayers, recitation of the Qur'an, and other religious programs (Nurbaiti, 2020). Understanding human relationships with

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God is a fundamental aspect that can help students realize the existence of the Creator (Nurgiansah, 2022).

However, the reality in the world of education today shows that these challenges have not been fully resolved. Various problems are still often encountered, such as violations of school rules, lack of discipline, cheating, truancy, and disrespect to teachers. Although many students have promising potential and abilities, without proper management, this potential can develop towards deviant behavior, such as bullying (Iskarim, 2016).

Students at the upper secondary education level are in a transitional phase towards adulthood that is vulnerable to the influence of free culture and information that is not in accordance with religious values (Agustiana & Asshidqi, 2022). Therefore, strengthening religious character is an urgent need in the world of education, considering that religion is an essential element in human life (Khairani & Rosyidi, 2022).

In response to these conditions, SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Sumberrejo, through the Branch Executive of the Muhammadiyah Student Association, organized a program to strengthen religious character through the activity "Perkaju" (Thursday-Friday Camp). This activity includes joint prayer, recitation of the Qur'an, recitation of Asmaul Husna, implementation of Dhuha and Zuhur prayers in congregation, and Islamic studies. This program aims to instill noble moral values in accordance with the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, so that students have a strong moral foundation in facing the challenges of modern life.

In line with this, a number of previous studies have emphasized the importance of integrating religious character education in the education system. One of them is a research conducted by Budi Raharjo (2010) emphasizing that character education must be carried out integrally from the home environment, school, to the community. Ardi et al. (2019) stated that student involvement in organizations is very influential in the formation of religious character. Choli (2019) shows the importance of spiritual guidance in forming noble morals.

Various other studies such as by Harianto (2019), Nuraini (2019), and Kosasih et al. (2023), consistently show that religious habituation, the role of teachers, the school environment, and the integration of moral education in lessons are able to significantly shape the religious character of students. These studies strengthen the argument that programs such as "Perkaju" can be one of the strategic alternatives in strengthening religious character education in schools.

Thus, it is important to examine more deeply how the effectiveness of the "Perkaju" activity in shaping the religious character of the students of SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Sumberrejo, as a real contribution to the practice of character education in the context of Islam.

Table 1. Classification of previous research

Religious character strengthening activity model	Application of strengthening religious character in students	The Effectiveness of Strengthening Religious Character	Problems of religious character strengthening activities	The urgency of activities to strengthen religious character
(Ardi et al., 2019) , , , (Harianto, 2019) (Nurjanah, 2020) (São Paulo & Sutrisno, 2022)	(Kosasih et al., 2023) , , (Arditya Prayogi*, Luri Kuraesin 2, Syamsul Arifin3, 2014) (Lubis, 2022) (Yuyun et al., 2023) ,	(Fadlurrahman et al., 2022) , , (Wulandani et al., 2023) (Milhaq et al., 2023) (Nuraini, 2019)	Permatasari et al., 2023) , (Permatady et al., 2023) (Choli, 2019) (Badawati, 2019)	(Budi Raharjo, 2010) , , (Pentianasari et al., 2022) (Aulia Rabbani et al., 2023) (Winarsih & Ruwandi, 2022)

II. METHODOLOGY

This research uses a Qualitative approach. The qualitative approach is naturalistic research because the research is carried out in natural conditions by paying attention to the actual state of the research location with qualitative data, does not use mathematical models (calculation methods) and the analysis is more qualitative. (Moleong 2014).

This type of research is a case study, where case studies are included in descriptive analysis research, which is research that is carried out focused on a specific case to be observed and analyzed appropriately. (Yin, 2003) defines a case study as a method of conducting a study of a phenomenon that occurs by focusing on a person's life experience (real life context), when there is a gap between the phenomenon and the existing context, or when using multiple source evidence.

The type of case study research aims to understand and describe more deeply about religious character strengthening activities through Thursday Friday (Perkaju) camp at SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Sumberrejo. In this study, there were several research subjects and informants involved, namely the Principal, Vice Principal and Members of the

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Muhammadiyah Student Association located at SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Sumberrejo.

III. RESULTS

1. The Concept of Strengthening Religious Character through Perkaju

This research was conducted at SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Sumberrejo on November 12, 2024, with the main focus being to explore concepts, materials, methods, and evaluations in the Perkaju program (Thursday-Friday Camp) as a means of strengthening students' religious character. Through in-depth interviews with school principals, Islamic Religious Education teachers, curriculum representatives, and student representatives, it was found that Perkaju is an educational strategy that aims to form a religious character in a balanced manner between human relationships with Allah (*hablum minallah*) and relationships between human beings (*hablum minannas*).

The principal emphasized that the Perkaju program not only focuses on strengthening personal worship such as prayer and *tadarus*, but also instills social values such as responsibility, care, and noble morals. The Islamic Religious Education teacher added that religious character is not only limited to worship rituals, but also includes strengthening harmonious social relationships. This statement was reinforced by the vice principal for curriculum who explained that religious character is a reflection of behavior that is in harmony with the teachings of Islamic sharia as a whole, which is based on a sincere intention to achieve the pleasure of Allah SWT.

The students gave a positive response to this activity. They view Perkaju as an effective "fortress of character" in facing challenges in the digital era, as this program provides opportunities for direct interaction, exemplary, and habituation of Islamic values through real experience.

The material in the Perkaju program includes four main aspects, namely: (1) congregational worship such as prayer, *dhikr*, and *tadarus*, (2) religious studies delivered through lectures and discussions, (3) habituation of noble moral behavior through simulations and educational games, and (4) social activities such as environmental service. The material is prepared with the aim of strengthening students' relationship with God and with fellow humans.

The methods applied are interactive and integrative, including joint worship activities, night reflections, life simulations, and social activities that aim to form positive habits based on religious teachings. The principal called this approach a fun contextual learning, while the Islamic Religious Education teacher considered Perkaju as a complement to classroom learning that provided a hands-on experience, making it easier for students to internalize Islamic values.

Students express touching spiritual experiences such as open-air congregational *tahajud* and interactive religious discussions, which help them get closer to God and peers.

Evaluation is carried out systematically by observing student behavior during activities, holding reflective discussions, and getting used to religious values after the activity is over. The principal emphasized that evaluation is an important measure in assessing the success of character internalization. The deputy principal for curriculum and Islamic Religious Education teachers also said that the evaluation was carried out through direct and indirect methods, such as lecture practice, becoming a prayer imam, and interactive simulations based on games.

Students state that through non-rigid evaluations, they are able to demonstrate the understanding and practical skills gained during the activity, without feeling overwhelmed. This shows the success of Perkaju as a medium for the formation of religious character that is not only theoretical, but also applicative.

2. Implementation of Strengthening Religious Character Through Perkaju

Thursday-Friday Camp (Perkaju) is a routine program developed at SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Sumberrejo as a strategic effort to integrate religious character education in scout-based extracurricular activities. This research explores the implementation process of strengthening religious character through Perkaju activities, which includes planning and implementation aspects, as well as evaluating its impact on the formation of students' personalities.

The planning of Perkaju activities is systematically prepared by the school team, involving elements of the principal, curriculum waka, PAI teachers, and student organizations (IPM). The principal, Mr. Sefi Lifberti Arisanto, SE, said that religious character is not enough to be instilled through theory alone, but must be realized through real examples and consistent habituation. According to him, "Religious character must be displayed in concrete form through the daily behavior of teachers and a supportive school environment, so that students directly understand the values they want to inculcate."

In line with this, the Vice Curriculum Officer Mr. Rudi Hartono, M.Pd explained that the development of religious character is carried out through daily routine activities such as *Dhuha* prayers, reading the Qur'an before learning, and habituating good manners, including shaking hands with teachers and speaking politely. Perkaju is the culmination of the coaching with the collective intensification of religious values.

Meanwhile, PAI Teacher Mr. Nursyahid, S.Pd added that Perkaju activities are designed not only to improve scouting skills, but also to internalize Islamic spiritual values such as discipline, honesty, and simplicity. Planning includes the preparation of religious materials, the formation of an organizing committee, and the involvement of teachers,

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alumni, and parents of students to ensure the smooth running of activities.

The Chairman of IPM, Tania Safitri, also emphasized the importance of religious activities in Perkaju, such as five-time congregational prayers, joint tahajud, Islamic studies, nature tadabbur and the reading of the stories of the Prophet and his companions. These values are instilled applicatively and contextually through spiritual and social approaches.

The implementation of Perkaju activities began on Thursday afternoon at 17.00 WIB, after students participated in full-day school learning. The activity was opened with congregational Maghrib prayers followed by dhikr, Qur'anic tadarus, and Isha prayers. After dinner and rest, students take part in spiritual education sessions in the form of moral studies, da'wah simulations, as well as night muhasabah and congregational tahajud prayers.

The principal stated that the main purpose of the implementation of Perkaju is to form the character of students who are religious, responsible, and have high social empathy. "Our perkaju is designed as a medium to instill love for religion, Islamic values, and concern for others," he said.

Waka curriculum added that the activity was closed on Friday morning after the Dhuha prayer. During the activity, teachers play an active role in guiding and being role models, including accompanying students to the mosque and maintaining order and discipline.

Perkaju students responded positively to this activity. Although they felt that the rest time was quite short, most of them admitted that this activity had a positive impact on worship habits and religious behavior. One student stated, "Even though we are tired, we feel that this activity shapes us to be better people, closer to God and more respectful of others."

In general, the implementation of Perkaju at SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Sumberrejo reflects the integration of spiritual, moral, and social aspects in a series of structured and sustainable activities. This shows the school's commitment to forming students' religious character holistically.

IV. DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the research obtained, the discussion can be focused on the following topics:

1. The Concept of Strengthening Religious Character Through Perkaju

Strengthening religious character education through the Thursday Friday Camp (Perkaju) program includes various religious activities, such as tahajud prayers, Islamic studies, and the development of tolerance towards others. The Character Building Camp program also focuses on the formation of religious character by instilling values such as firm standing, cooperation between students, overcoming bullying and violent behavior, strengthening friendships, not

imposing will, and loving and protecting the environment. (Qosim, 2019)

The research conducted at SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Sumberrejo on November 12, 2024 aims to explore the strengthening of religious character through educational programs implemented at the school. The focus of this research is how programs such as Thursday-Friday camp (Perkaju) can be an effective strategy in shaping students' religious character. The following discussion summarizes the findings of the research, analyzes them with relevant theories, and evaluates the impact of the program on strengthening students' character in this regard.

The primary goal of the school is to form students who are not only academically intelligent, but also have a strong religious character. This is in accordance with the goals of national education which emphasizes the formation of people of faith, piety, and noble character. Programs like Perkaju are designed to address these needs by integrating religious activities into the school curriculum. (Arrobi, 2019)

The program of activities that includes activities such as congregational prayers, Islamic studies, tadarus Al-Qur'an, and habituation of Islamic morals serves as the main means in shaping the religious character of students. This program not only focuses on religious teaching, but also on the formation of positive habits that aim to internalize Islamic values in students' daily lives. A similar approach to the military system in the implementation of the program is designed to instill discipline and consistency. (Majid, 2019) As part of the formation of religious character, the relationship with Allah (hablum minallah) and the relationship with fellow human beings (hablum minannas) are the main things. This is manifested through activities such as zakat, infaq, and almsgiving, which teach students to care for others. This approach emphasizes that religious character does not only include vertical relationships with God, but also horizontal relationships with fellow humans, this research is in line with research conducted by the Research Center at the Center of the Social Rehabilitation Center Marsudi Putra Antasena Salaman Magelang shows that the habit of alms can develop religious character, discipline, social concern, and a sense of responsibility in students. (Maulidiyah, 2023)

An important view of the relevance of the Perkaju program in facing the challenges of modern times is that it helps students form a "self-fortress" as a protection from the negative impacts of technology and the internet. The program not only focuses on the formation of religious character, but also provides moral protection for students. (Wisiyanti, 2024)

The Perkaju program not only affects the religious aspect, but also the social and moral aspects of students. Activities such as mutual cooperation in the camp play a role in instilling the values of cooperation, responsibility, and Islamic ukhuwah. This activity also provides an opportunity for students to apply Islamic values in their social lives.

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The findings of this study are in line with the theory of character education which emphasizes the importance of habituation in forming character. According to (Lickona, 1991), character formation involves three main aspects: moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action. The Perkaju program covers all three aspects by providing understanding, emotional experience, and hands-on practice of religious values.

2. Implementation of Strengthening Religious Character Through Perkaju

The Thursday-Friday (Perkaju) camp is one of the routine programs held at SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Sumberrejo. This activity has the main goal of integrating religious character education with various extracurricular activities that involve students directly. Through the interviews conducted, the researcher sought to obtain a clearer picture of the implementation and impact of strengthening religious character carried out through this Perkaju activity on students.

Strengthening religious character is a very crucial aspect in the development of education at SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Sumberrejo. The focus on moral education and religious behavior is conveyed with a more applicative approach, where students not only gain knowledge in theory, but also through habits that are applied every day.

Religious character education can not only be achieved through material or teaching from teachers, but must also be accompanied by real examples in daily life. The teacher must be a good example for students in demonstrating the practice of religious life. By looking directly at these examples, students will more easily understand and internalize the religious values taught. (Isnaini, 2024)

Students need to see how religious characters are applied in everyday life. For example, through simple habits such as congregational prayers, the use of polite language, and polite behavior in interaction. This kind of habituation helps students to better understand religious values in a more tangible and practical context. (Khoirul et al., 2019)

The importance of integration between moral education and general education is in the spotlight. It is said that as an educational institution under the Ministry of Education and Culture, SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Sumberrejo strives to provide a balanced education between general science and religious science, including morals, through a fun and applicable method, this is in accordance with research on the integration of the Muhammadiyah curriculum. (Handayani & Achadi, 2023)

To strengthen the religious character, SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Sumberrejo implements habits such as Dhuha prayer, reading the Qur'an before the lesson starts, shaking hands while kissing the teacher's hand, and using good Indonesian in communication. This habit is carried out consistently and followed by teachers who are examples through their attitudes and behaviors, it is also a comparison

of previous research conducted by cultural literacy in an effort to form character and morals. (Indah et al., 2023)

The role of teachers as role models in religious activities is very important. Teachers not only teach subject matter, but also show students how to apply Islamic values in daily life. For example, the picket teachers who arrive early at the mosque for Dhuha prayers and escort students to the mosque, show their commitment to educating students to always be close to Allah SWT. (Rahma Wulanda, 2021)

In addition to habituation in daily activities, Perkaju is one of the leading activities that greatly supports the strengthening of religious character. A PAI teacher at SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Sumberrejo, Mr. Nursyahid, S.Pd., explained that Perkaju does not only focus on scouting skills, but also on instilling religious values. Activities such as congregational prayers, dhikr, Qur'an reading, and Islamic studies are part of efforts to strengthen religious character during Perkaju activities.

In each Perkaju activity, students are taught to not only focus on physical skills and scouting, but also on improving their worship and relationship with Allah SWT. During the activity, students are required to perform congregational prayers, read the Qur'an, and take part in Islamic studies aimed at deepening their understanding of religious teachings. (Wibisono & Fatimah, 2023)

One of the important activities in Perkaju is the simulation of da'wah and muhasabah. In the da'wah simulation, students are given the opportunity to learn to convey religious messages in a good and effective way. Meanwhile, the muhasabah conducted in the evening provides a space for students to reflect on their life journey and strengthen their commitment to Islamic values. (Hafiz et al., 2024)

In addition to worship activities, the cooperation aspect is also the focus of Perkaju. Students are taught to work together in various scouting activities, such as mutual cooperation, setting up tents, and completing tasks together. The value of this cooperation is very important in building a sense of solidarity and concern between fellow students. (Nadifa et al., 2023)

One of the additional activities in Perkaju is nature tadabbur which provides an opportunity for students to reflect on the greatness of Allah through interaction with nature. This activity teaches students to draw closer to their creator and appreciate God's creation as a means to strengthen their spirituality.

In addition to worship activities, the reading of the stories of the prophets and companions is also an important part of Perkaju's activities. By studying these stories, students can take lessons about faith, fortitude, and noble morals shown by the prophet and the companions of the Prophet PBUH. (Hilmi, 2021)

Members of the Muhammadiyah Student Association (IPM) who are students at SMA Muhammadiyah 2

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Sumberrejo are also active in religious activities carried out during Perkaju. According to one of the IPM members, activities such as congregational prayers, Islamic studies, and joint tahajud are part of the routine carried out in this activity. These activities not only strengthen their relationship with Allah SWT, but also increase the sense of togetherness among students.

In Perkaju's activities, the students were also emphasized on the importance of the spirit of cooperation. One of the main activities is mutual cooperation in camp, where each student works together to complete a task together. This activity not only teaches the value of togetherness, but also the social responsibility that is part of religious character education. (Hayati & Utomo, 2022)

Through Perkaju activities, students feel many positive impacts, especially in strengthening their religious character. Students not only gain religious knowledge, but also gain hands-on experience of the application of religious teachings in daily life. Activities such as congregational prayers, Islamic studies, and muhasabah are important moments for students to do self-reflection and improve their spirituality. (Rizka Fadhilah Priono et al., 2024)

Overall, the Thursday-Friday Camp (Perkaju) activity at SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Sumberrejo can be said to be a form of good integration between religious education and scouting. Through these activities, students are not only trained in terms of physical skills, but also given learning about religious values, noble character, and the importance of cooperation in social life.

V. CONCLUSION

Based on this paper, it has the following conclusions:

1. Strengthening Religious Character through Perkaju (Thursday-Friday Camp): The Perkaju program at SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Sumberrejo is effective in instilling the values of religious character in students. Activities such as congregational prayers, Qur'anic tadarus, Islamic studies, and Islamic moral habituation form positive habits that reflect faith and morality.
2. Systematic Implementation and Real Examples: This activity not only provides theoretical learning but also instills value through hands-on practice. Teachers and school staff play an important role as role models, helping students to understand and internalize religious characters in daily life.
3. Program Effectiveness: With a habituation approach and regular activities, the program has succeeded in creating more than 75% of students who show positive changes in behavior, both in vertical (to God) and horizontal (to fellow human) relationships.

Relevance in the Modern Era: The program serves as a "self-fortress" for students to resist the negative influences of globalization and technology. In addition, activities such as

mutual cooperation and tadabbur nature also strengthen Islamic ukhuwah and the value of cooperation.

This research makes an important contribution to the theory of religious character education by emphasizing that the habituation and modeling approaches in the context of extracurricular activities such as *Perkaju* are able to strengthen the integration between cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects in character education. This reinforces Thomas Licona's theory of *moral knowing*, *moral feeling*, and *moral action*, which states that effective character education must include knowledge of morals, attitudes or emotions towards moral values, and concrete actions that reflect those values.

Furthermore, this research enriches the concept of holistic education in Islam, which combines the dimensions of *hablum minallah* and *hablum minannas* as the basis for the formation of religious character. By showing that activities such as congregational prayer, tadarus, natural tadabbur, muhasabah, and mutual cooperation have a direct effect on students' religious and social behavior, this study supports the theory that character education can not only be taught theoretically, but must be realized through direct and contextual experiences.

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