

Implementation of Islamic Education in Strengthening the Social Care Character of Students at Madrasah Aliyah

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of Islamic education at Madrasah Aliyah Amsilati Bangsri Jepara in cultivating students' care character. It aims to provide an in-depth understanding of the educational programs that contribute to developing this vital character trait among students. A descriptive qualitative methodology was employed to observe the implementation of various educational programs at the institution. The participants included students across all grades. Data were collected through observations, interviews, and document analysis, and analyzed through a three-stage process: reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing. The study identified eight principal programs that effectively foster the care character among students. These programs include community service initiatives, educational support activities, and other projects that promote the sharing of material resources and knowledge. The findings indicate that these programs significantly enhance the character of social care among students. By participating in these initiatives, students develop a sense of responsibility and empathy, which are crucial components of the care character. Islamic education at Madrasah Aliyah Amsilati Bangsri Jepara plays a significant role in strengthening the care character of students through well-structured educational programs. This study highlights the importance of incorporating such programs in educational curricula to nurture socially responsible individuals.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Moral decay in society and educational settings is increasingly visible, evidenced by rising criminality, injustice, and violence. This crisis in morals and ethics underscores an urgent need for character education. Recent studies have indicated that the lack of ethical guidance and moral education contributes to the escalation of antisocial behaviors among youth, leading to broader societal issues (Walker et al., 2021). The increasing visibility of moral decay within society and educational environments—marked by rising rates of criminality, injustice, and violence—highlights a crisis in morals and ethics. This situation poses a significant challenge, especially if educational institutions fail to act promptly to incorporate character education as mandated by government policies (Nucci & Narvaez,

2020). Implementing comprehensive character education programs has been shown to reduce instances of misconduct and foster environments of integrity and respect within schools (Jones et al., 2022). Therefore, it is imperative for educational institutions to prioritize character education to address this growing concern and build a foundation for a more just and ethical society.

Character education, which aims to instill virtues such as dignity, moral integrity, and social responsibility, is not only about academic achievement but also about fostering a dignified and morally upright society. Studies, including those by Karimah et al. (2023) and Jeynes H.W. (2017), emphasize the need for early implementation of character education to enhance societal and academic outcomes. Character education becomes an appropriate solution to the above problems, and madrasah as an educational institution is expected to be a place that can realize the mission of character education (Ainiyah, 2013). Furthermore, Fathurrahman (2021) advocates for the role of Islamic education in strengthening social care, suggesting that such programs are pivotal for collaborative and community-focused problem-solving.

National education aims not only to make an individual intelligent but also dignified, morally upright, knowledgeable, independent, creative, responsible, and of good character. Character consists of positive values inherent in an individual that differentiate them from others. This implies that character is not inherited and can change (Nur Anggraini et al., 2021). Character education is a system of instilling character values in school members, which includes components of knowledge, awareness or willingness, and actions to implement these values, both towards God Almighty (YME), oneself, others, the environment, and the nation, thus forming a perfect human being (*insan kamil*) (Himmah et al., 2019). Therefore, integrating character education into the national curriculum is essential for developing well-rounded individuals who can contribute positively to society.

The research underscores the importance of initiating character education early (Karimah et al., 2023), and meta-analyses suggest its positive impacts on both behavioral and academic outcomes (Jeynes H.W., 2017). This aligns with Fathurrahman's (2021) findings on the role of Islamic education in fostering social care, suggesting a foundational need for character education within educational frameworks. Motivated by this evidence, this study focuses on the implementation of Islamic education at Madrasah Aliyah Amsilati Bangsri, Jepara, Indonesia, aiming to understand and illustrate how it enhances the care character among students. The focus of this research is to understand how the character of students is strengthened through the implementation of Islamic education at Madrasah Aliyah Amsilati Bangsri, Jepara, Indonesia. The purpose of this research is to explain the implementation of Islamic education in strengthening students' care character at madrasah aliyah.

2. METHODS

This research employs a qualitative approach and analytical descriptive method. The qualitative approach is oriented toward phenomena that are naturalistic or natural. Analytical descriptive method is a method that used to describe or give illustration about research object through data or sample which has been obtained without doing analysis and making conclusion which available for public (Sugiyono, 2009). In other words, it takes problem or focuses in the problems as provided when research is being done, the result of research then processed and analyzed to make the conclusion. The research is conducted at Madrasah Aliyah Amsilati Bangsri Jepara. It means that the participant in this research is all of students in this madrasah, start from 10th grade until 12th grade.

The data collection was carried out through three steps, which were observation, interview, and documentation. Observations were conducted on six separate occasions — three times focusing on student interactions to gauge character development, and three times during specific program activities to assess their role in character strengthening. The interviews were held with teachers, students, and program coordinators to gain comprehensive insights into the effectiveness of the character education programs. Additionally, documentation involved analyzing relevant school records and program materials to corroborate the findings from observations and interviews.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the head of Madrasah, the deputy head of student affairs, and three teachers, focusing on their perspectives on the character education programs. Each interview lasted approximately 45 minutes and was recorded and transcribed for analysis. The documentary analysis involved reviewing annual reports, program descriptions, and photographic evidence of activities, which provided a contextual backdrop to the observed behaviors and reported experiences. This comprehensive approach ensured a robust understanding of the character education programs' impact and effectiveness. The combination of interviews, observations, and documentary analysis allowed for a well-rounded evaluation, leading to a deeper insight into how these programs contribute to student character development.

Data analysis involved three main steps: (1) data reduction, where irrelevant or redundant data were filtered out to focus on the most pertinent information; (2) data display, where the remaining information was organized into coherent themes to facilitate interpretation; and (3) verification, where findings were checked against raw data to ensure reliability and validity. During data reduction, careful consideration was given to retaining data that most accurately reflected the research objectives. The verification process also included triangulation methods to cross-check data from observations, interviews, and documents, thereby enhancing the overall robustness of the analysis. This systematic approach ensured that the conclusions drawn were well-supported by comprehensive and credible data.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The social care character education at Madrasah Aliyah Amsilati requires stages, thus it is developed through the stages of knowledge, implementation, and habituation. To realize the strengthening of character education, in addition to the material taught in intracurricular activities, it is also carried out in extracurricular activities. Among several methods implemented is the method of habituation.

The habituation method is one effective way to cultivate the social care character of students because they are trained and accustomed to do it every day. Habits performed every day and repeated will always be ingrained and remembered by students, making it easy to do without being reminded. This habituation method encourages and provides space for students in theories that require direct application, making heavy theories lighter for students when practiced frequently (Ahsanul Khaq, 2019). Habituation makes students feel familiar with some activities and it will also make students do the activities lightly.

Habituation is essentially the repetition of actions or words by an individual, reinforcing behaviors through consistent practice. It is an effective method, particularly for training students to cultivate and strengthen their character traits. Therefore, habituation must be directed towards instilling habits that exemplify good behavior (Kurniawan, 2017). One key habit is fostering social care, which includes developing an attitude of mutual assistance and respect for others. Additionally, by consistently engaging in community service and cooperative activities, students can internalize values of empathy and collaboration, which are essential for building a compassionate and supportive society.

As per the interview with Najib Habibi, the head of the madrasah, it is stated that students' activities beyond classroom learning include environmental care donation programs or social activities, encompassing various programs such as:

3.1. *Damai Ati (Brotherhood of Islamic Converts in Amsilati)*

This program has supported 950 converts (muallaf) and, according to Najib Habibi (headmaster), activities are conducted every Friday Wage in the Bondo community, Jepara, and Friday Pahing in the Karang Gondang community, Jepara. These activities, presented through religious gatherings, include instructions on performing the five daily prayers followed by dhikr, reciting wirid after prayers, and praying to Allah with sincerity and humility. After participating in these gatherings, the community members receive grocery distributions from madrasah students, demonstrating social concern for the converts. On average, participants feel happy and comfortable engaging in this program (Interview on

November 5, 2023). These activities foster students' tolerance towards people of other religions, enhance social concern through food distribution, and strengthen students' faith while indirectly teaching them to preach and spread Islam.

The activity is strengthened by the opinion of Isnaeni & Ningsih (2021), cited by Anastasya et al. (2022), that social care character is an attitude that grows from someone's interaction with affection and empathy, so that the person becomes aware of helping others in need. The social care character is formed from social interactions experienced by each individual. In these interactions, there is a mutual influence or reciprocal relationship between individuals (Anastasya & Wulandari, 2022).

Through this medium, the continuation of interview with Habibi stated that the community members were also given lessons on the procedures for ablution (wudlu), knowing the conditions and pillars of ablution, and everything that invalidates ablution. Then the procedure for prayer, starting from the takbiratul ihram, recitation after the takbiratul ihram, correct recitation of surah al-fatihah, especially during prayer, reciting short surahs in prayer, the procedure for bowing (ruku'), standing, prostration, sitting between two prostrations, the procedure for tashahhud, both the beginning and the end, and then the first greeting in prayer. The study provides the aim that the Muallaf congregation can gradually perform the prayer, which is an obligation for Muslims. After completing the study, they are invited to have a meal together in groups, and then 5 kg packages of rice are distributed for them to take home (Interview on 5th of November 2023).

The students of this madrasah are developing attitudes of helping each other, fostering togetherness in social activities, and showing mutual respect, especially towards converts whose presence needs reinforcement. This approach aligns with the spirit of brotherhood (ukhuwwah) and familial bonds that constitute the vision of the madrasah, ensuring that all congregation members willingly participate in and support these initiatives. Consequently, these efforts not only strengthen community ties but also embody the core values and mission of the madrasah, promoting a harmonious and supportive environment for all.

In relation to the lectures presented in the Damai Ati (Muallaf Islam Brotherhood Amsilati) activity, the emphasis on prayer aligns with the analysis that underscores the importance of understanding the laws related to prayer by seeking knowledge from scholars. As Ath-Thusi notes, those seeking knowledge in prayer should first learn the science of prayer, study obligatory and voluntary prayers, and understand their virtues (Primasari, 2017). Implementing this program, however, is not without its challenges. Some converts experience difficulties, feeling unfamiliar with the worship practices they must perform and struggling to memorize the Arabic readings in worship. This presents a challenge for both the organizers and the students, requiring patience and perseverance in spreading Allah's teachings. Despite these difficulties, the dedication to educating and supporting converts fosters a strong sense of community and spiritual growth.

The connection with the implementation of Islamic education is the study of dhikr (remembrance of Allah) and prayers conducted in the brotherhood lecture activities of Muallaf Islam Amsilati by the local community. This aligns with Najati's opinion that the perseverance of a believer in supplicating and remembering Allah through tasbih (glorification of Allah), takbir (praising Allah), istighfar (seeking forgiveness), and reading the Qur'an will result in the purity and cleanliness of the soul, as well as feelings of peace and tranquility. Furthermore, he explains that supplications and remembrance of Allah can bring about tranquility and peace in the soul, undoubtedly serving as a remedy for the anxieties felt by humans when faced with various pressures and dangers in life, with no place to lean on and no helper. If someone wants to experience a sense of calm and tranquility, then draw near to Him, who is Allah. Given the importance of supplication and remembrance of Allah as one way to achieve a sense of calm and tranquility, it is necessary to understand the issues of supplication and remembrance of Allah deeply, not only their meanings but also the methods and techniques of their implementation (Muhajarah, 2016).

The Islamic studies are in line with the opinion of Muchlas Samani (2011) that character education is the cultivation of character values in individuals, covering components of knowledge, awareness or

willingness, and actions to implement good values toward God, oneself, others, the environment, and the nation, so that one can become a complete human being. Thus, character education is not only about cognitive aspects but also involves the implementation of Islamic education in real-life experiences in the daily lives of students (Ali Fathurrahman, 2021).

According to an interview with Arifin, the activities that emphasize Islamic values and the development of social care character for the *muallaf* congregation are conducted during the study of noble morality (*akhlakul karimah*). The aim is to ensure that the participants cultivate righteousness not only in their relationship with Allah but also in their interactions with other people, by fostering noble character. This program also promotes camaraderie among *muallaf* from different regions. During each session, Madrasah Aliyah Amsilati provides snacks, distributes rice for daily consumption, and offers additional capital of 1,000,000 rupiahs to the study group members through a lottery, serving as a business stimulus. Additionally, the *muallaf* congregation members receive free medical treatment, especially for those seeking care at the nearest health center or hospital (Interview on November 5, 2023).

It can be understood that the above activities aim to strengthen noble morality (*akhlak al-karimah*), which emphasizes simplicity and abundant worship to achieve a peaceful life and closeness (*al-qurb*) to Allah. This journey involves the purification of the self (*tazkiyatun nafs*) and experiencing the presence of Allah in daily life (*ihsan*). According to al-Ghazali, everyone can pursue these paths through the purification of the heart, concentration in remembrance (*zikir*), continuous recitation (*wirid*), and prayer (Kurniawan, 2016).

What students do in implementing Islamic education is considered righteous deeds (*amal shaleh*), as righteous deeds can be interpreted as every action manifests environmental concern. Performing righteous deeds is equivalent to engaging in *islah* or reform. Islamic teachings, especially positive Sufism, view righteous deeds as the sole criterion for the success of an individual in pursuing mysticism. This means there is no mysticism without righteous deeds, such as aiding the needy, especially converts (*muallaf*), showing compassion to fellow humans, rejecting filthy and disgraceful actions, caring for the environment, and so on (Ahmad Buchori Muslim, 2019).

Through the implementation of this program students became more tolerance with others, their social skill also improved a lot. Students also tend to help other people who need help. This program also make them more grateful of their life.

3.2. *Obat Ati (Small Trader Organization of Amsilati)*

The term "bakul alit" refers to small traders. According to Luqman (*ustadz*), the "Obat Ati" activity aims to eliminate the presence of loan sharks in the Bangsri Jepara market area and its surroundings. Loan sharks use lending models that burden small communities (*tiyang alit*) with daily repayments at high interest rates, which stifle their economic activities. To counter this, the Amsilati Aliyah Madrasah family provides interest-free capital loans to small traders in the local area. This support enables them to sustain their livelihoods through their trading activities in the traditional market (Interview on November 5, 2023).

The "Obat Ati" activity of the Amsilati Aliyah Madrasah students conveys a moral message of social concern for those who are financially less privileged, particularly in terms of capital for their trading businesses in the Bangsri Jepara market. In other words, to achieve social welfare for the *muallaf* congregation, the Amsilati Aliyah Madrasah implements a loan assistance program without any interest rates. This initiative aims to support the livelihoods of the small community members who struggle to make ends meet in their daily lives. Through this assistance, they can run their trading businesses in the market, utilizing the obtained capital to operate and sustain their ventures.

This program teaches students to be truthful and to stay away from usury. In addition, this program has the potential to raise students' social awareness of the plight of the poor, fostering empathy and a sense of responsibility towards their community. However, students may find it difficult to implement this program because the majority lack trading experience. To mitigate this

challenge, the program could incorporate basic training sessions on trading and financial management, equipping students with the necessary skills to effectively support small traders.

It means that the students are developing social ethics and Islamic habits rooted in a profound sense of humanity by showcasing a renewed attitude of mutual care, understanding, respect, love, and assistance among fellow human beings and citizens. In this context, the cultivation of exemplary behavior (*al-uswah*) is developed in the context of compassion, which should be embodied in the behavior of leaders, both formal and informal, at every level of society (Adha & Susanto, 2020).

In the program, it is also in line with the thoughts of Fazlur Rahman, as quoted by Amin Syukur, that positive Sufism or neo Sufism instills high discipline and active engagement in the field of the struggle for life, both socially, politically, and economically. Its movement leans more towards struggle and reform, while its program is more within the boundaries of moral positivism and social well-being rather than being confined to the limits of spiritual or eschatological aspects. Its nature is more purification-oriented and more activist, aiming to eradicate moral, social, and religious deviations (Ahmad Buchori Muslim, 2019).

It can be understood that the essence of the Islamic religion is morality, encompassing the moral relationship between a servant and God, an individual with oneself, and one with others, including members of society with their environment. The morality taught in Sufism aims to elevate humans to the level of *Shafa al-Tauhid*. At this stage, individuals will acquire the morality of Allah (*at-takhalluq bi Akhlaq Allah*). When humans can behave with such morality, harmony is achieved between human will and the divine will of Allah SWT. The consequence of this is that humans will not engage in activities except those that are positive, beneficial, and in line with the demands of Allah SWT. (Ulya, 2011).

In other words, the implementation of Islamic education, as mentioned by al-Taftazani, indicates that Sufi Islam has moral, psychological, and epistemological characteristics. One of the five characteristics of Sufi Islam includes the enhancement of morality, which aims to purify the soul to meet the Divine Essence. Without morality, this teaching would not exist. Ibn al-Qayyim emphasizes that Sufi Islam is inherently moral. Eliminating reprehensible traits and adorning oneself with noble qualities represents the initial stage of moral enhancement in Sufi Islam (Muhammad Ainun Najib, 2018). Through the implementation of this program students can increase their sense of social and humanitarian concern for the weak. Students can also increase their knowledge about good lending and borrowing according to Islamic law.

3.3. Provision and Constuction of Artesian Wells

According to an interview with Luqman, the students of Aliyah Amsilati, with the support of their religious leader, are deeply concerned about the water supply for daily needs in the surrounding community. In the Jepara area, several regions still lack access to a reliable water supply system. The planned initiative aims to provide 1,000 artesian wells, ensuring comprehensive assistance for their construction and readiness for community use. Each artesian well requires a budget of approximately 40 to 50 million rupiahs, fully funded by Amsilati. This initiative benefits mosques, prayer halls, educational institutions, and the general public. So far, around 3,250 wells have been successfully constructed and are operational in the Bangsri, Jepara community (Interview on November 5, 2023). This well-drilling project not only provides clean water but also inspires children to care more about the environment and foster mutual support within the community.

This is in line with Hamka's perspective that Sufi Islamic education will be positive, even very positive, because it is carried out in the form of real activities that align with the contents of worship formulated by the Qur'an and Sunnah. It is implemented based on activities rooted in high social sensitivity, meaning activities that can support the "empowerment of the Muslim community" to overcome economic poverty, education, knowledge, culture, politics, and mentality (Kurniawan, 2013).

In this context, Aliyah Amsilati Madrasah realizes social care and sensitivity by constructing artesian wells to ensure that the community's daily activities related to water, especially worship activities related to cleanliness (ablution), can be fulfilled. It can be understood in accordance with Anggraini's statement that one of the values found in character education is social care character. Social

care is an attitude that shows sympathy and empathy towards someone in need. In other words, social care is a sense of responsibility to help someone in difficulty and a motivation to take action to overcome it (Nur Anggraini et al., 2021).

In the context of the implementation of Islamic education, it is emphasized that activities should be balanced in their orientation, not only pursuing material worldly excellence but also addressing spiritual matters for the hereafter. Education should avoid dichotomizing the knowledge taught within it, meaning a balance between perennial knowledge and acquired knowledge because everything is holistic and derived from the All-Knowing Creator. Similarly, education should consider the domains developed in students, not only in the cognitive domain but also in the psychomotor and, most importantly, the affective domain or self-values. This is because humans are complete beings, both physically and spiritually. In Sufism, the development of IQ (intellectual intelligence or *dhaka al-dhihn*), EQ (emotional intelligence or *tasfiat al-qalb*), and SQ (spiritual intelligence or *tazkiyatun nafs*) is cultivated harmoniously, resulting in exceptional effectiveness both horizontally and vertically. The desired education in the concept of Sufism emphasizes emotional and spiritual intelligence, which essentially involves learning to adhere to Islamic demands when facing adversity, fortune, opposition from others, life challenges, wealth, poverty, self-control, and personal development (Kurniawan, 2016). Through this program students can increase their social sensitivity. They are more aware of people who need help. They also always lend a helping hand to them.

3.4. House Renovation

As like stated by Arifin, as the teacher this house renovation activity has been ongoing for 3 years, targeting financially disadvantaged families. The condition is that the families must own their own land with a valid certificate to build a habitable house. House renovation as a form of social care activity is activity that help or renovate house condition of poor person or group.

House renovation, as a form of social care activity, is an act of assisting or improving the living conditions of individuals or groups who are less fortunate. In other words, this activity carries the concept of social care, which is the implementation of the concept of social concern, demonstrating empathy and compassion for others. This concept is grounded in humanitarian teachings and moral values that encourage helping those in need. It reflects the implementation of Islamic religious values. In the context of a religious community, house renovation can be interpreted as the implementation of religious values that emphasize the importance of helping others. This can refer to the concept of charity, almsgiving, or social activities recommended by Islamic teachings. Through activities like house renovation, character education can be instilled, including values such as empathy, cooperation, and social responsibility. This shapes students as a generation with social awareness and empathy towards the conditions of others.

This has been implemented by the institution of Madrasah Aliyah Amsilati through a model of house renovation assistance and the renovation of mosques and prayer rooms. For the less fortunate individuals living in inadequate houses, students of Aliyah Amsilati, along with the religious leader (*kyai*), actively participate in providing assistance for renovating their homes. Additionally, support is extended to the maintenance of mosques and prayer rooms that are undergoing renovation or construction. This support includes providing necessary materials such as iron, cement, sand, bricks, wood, and covering the labor costs for construction workers.

Students learned how to collaborate during this home renovation. Mutual respect and appreciation, tolerance, honesty, genuineness, and sincerity are all necessary for mutual cooperation. As a result, this exercise helps develop students' moral character.

3.5. Renovation of Mosques and Prayer Rooms

According to an interview with Ircham (teacher), assistance is provided to mosque and prayer room committees (*ta'mir*) that are currently undergoing renovations but face limited financial resources, especially in communities that are less fortunate and less aware of the importance of such initiatives (Interview on November 5, 2023).

Islam teaches social benevolence through two main approaches. First, it commands and recommends social concern. For example, a Muslim should consider another Muslim as a brother, love others as he loves himself, and respect guests and neighbors (Nurcholis, 2011). Second, Islam incorporates a social aspect into every act of worship. The word "prayer" (shalat) uses plural language, not singular, indicating that praying is intended for social benevolence in addition to individual benefits. The obligation to greet with peace at the end of the prayer signifies the necessity of praying for the well-being of others. Additionally, Muslims are commanded to give to charity and be generous. These activities embody social benevolence, teaching them to care for others by sharing happiness through charitable acts with the wealth they receive (Nurcholis, 2011). By integrating these principles into daily practice, the assistance provided to mosque and prayer room committees exemplifies the broader Islamic commitment to fostering community support and well-being.

3.6. Social Assistance for Islamic Clothing for the Less Fortunate

According to an interview with Najib Habibi (headmaster), this assistance is intended for the less fortunate in the Bangsri and surrounding communities (Interview on November 5, 2023). The assistance can be interpreted from various perspectives. First, it embodies the concept of humanity and compassion, suggesting that helping others, including providing Islamic clothing, implements humanitarian and compassionate values. This aligns with religious teachings and moral values emphasizing the need to assist those in need. Second, the perspective of education and social welfare indicates that proper clothing can influence self-confidence and participation in social activities, including education. Third, the religious aspect means that assistance with Islamic clothing can fulfill spiritual needs, reflecting religious values. An analysis can determine how well the assistance meets these spiritual needs. Fourth, from an ethical and social responsibility standpoint, providing assistance includes considerations of fairness, equity, and respect for the dignity of the recipients. This comprehensive approach to assistance helps us gain a deeper understanding of the impact, motivation, and implications of providing Islamic clothing to the less fortunate.

3.7. Incentive Aid for Madrasah Diniyah & Qur'anic Education Park Teacher

This program aligns with Hamka's view that Sufistic Islamic education embodies noble character (ihsan), reflecting a deep esoteric religious experience without necessitating isolation ('uzlah). Sufistic Islamic education emphasizes active societal involvement and promotes a positive attitude toward life (Kurniawan, 2013).

In the context of instilling Sufistic Islamic values at Aliyah Amsilati Madrasah, the focus should not only be on faith and Islamic education but also on ihsan, fostering the awareness of Allah's presence in all aspects of life. This can be achieved through religious programs such as spiritual cleansing, intensive remembrance (dhikr) practices, and similar activities. The spiritual dimension reflected in these behaviors is crucial in Sufistic Islamic education (Muhammad Ainun Najib, 2018).

According to Luqman (teacher), incentive assistance for Madrasah Diniyah (MD) and Taman Pendidikan al-Qur'an (TPQ) teachers is a form of support and appreciation for those educating within these institutions. This assistance aims to improve teachers' well-being, enhance their motivation, and support the improvement of educational quality in MD and TPQ. The incentives are expected to boost teacher performance and motivation, thereby contributing positively to the educational quality (Interview on November 5, 2023).

Teachers are the cornerstone of successful education. Without teachers, the educational process would falter. Therefore, providing allowances is a way to repay their dedication to educating students. This program also teaches students to respect their teachers more, recognizing the valuable knowledge they impart. Through such initiatives, the educational environment becomes more supportive, fostering both academic and spiritual growth.

3.8. STMMU (Santri Takmir Masjid Musholla Building Ummah)

In an interview with Arifin (teacher), it was revealed that Aliyah Amsilati Islamic High School sends students to various regions to support mosques and prayer rooms by conducting religious

activities based on Islamic teachings. These activities include reading the Qur'an (Surah Yasin, Surah Waq'ah), making supplications, entreating Allah, and reciting blessings upon Prophet Muhammad SAW using the Dhiba'an model after the Fajr prayer congregation, following remembrance and litany (Interview on November 5, 2023). The students strive to perfect their prayers by fulfilling every pillar, maintaining presence of heart with Allah, bearing witness with intellect to the greatness of Allah SWT, and making continuous efforts to never be negligent or complacent in their remembrance of Allah. This dedication ensures their prayers are accepted (al-maqbulin) (Primasari, 2017).

The essence of Sufistic Islamic education is to draw closer to Allah SWT through the optimal practice of His teachings in all aspects of life, manifested in righteous deeds (Ahmad Buchori Muslim, 2019). This is reflected in the students' recitation of blessings upon Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), performed sincerely to seek blessings and grace for the Prophet. The students at Aliyah Amsilati Madrasah consistently recite these blessings, especially after the five daily obligatory prayers, using the term "sayyidina" (our master) to express special respect and profound love for the Prophet (Mustofa, 2018).

This activity is part of a programmed self-development initiative aimed at meeting the learning needs of the students. The general purpose is to provide opportunities for all students to develop and express themselves according to their needs, potentials, talents, interests, and the development of students adjusted to the madrasah's conditions. The specific goals include supporting education and learning by developing talents, interests, creativity, competencies, and habits in life, religious life skills, social skills, learning skills, insight, and career planning, problem-solving skills, and independence (Nafi'ah & Suyanto, 2014). This aligns with the regulations of the Minister of National Education of the Republic of Indonesia Number 39 of 2008 concerning student development (2008: 4).

Based on an interview with Luqman (teacher), the activities such as the Marching Band Gema Syi'ar Amsilati (MBSA), rebana (traditional drum), pencak silat (martial arts), and calligraphy are aimed at enriching and expanding the students' experiences. These extracurricular activities broaden knowledge and encourage the development of attitudes and values. Skills and attitudes acquired from such activities include skill development, strengthening noble character, maintaining spiritual and physical health, establishing a strong and independent personality, and fostering a sense of responsibility (Interview on November 5, 2023). These activities significantly enhance the madrasah's appeal and reputation. For instance, the MBSA represented the madrasah in the provincial-level Marching Band competition at the "Delta Marching Open Festival (DMOF) Indonesia XV 2018" in Sidoarjo, East Java, securing the national championship as the runner-up (Interview on November 5, 2023).

Prestige and quality in education are highly beneficial as they enhance the madrasah's accountability to the community and government, ensure the quality of its graduates, promote professional work, and increase healthy competition. Improving achievements in Madrasah Aliyah Amsilati is essential for developing students into reliable individuals with enhanced abilities in knowledge, skills, and technology. The key to improving educational achievement lies in a commitment to change. If all teachers and madrasah staff are committed to change, leaders can encourage them to find new ways to improve productivity and the quality of educational services (Maryati, 2016). Such activities align with the statement that madrasah activities are educational activities beyond academic subjects, designed to assist in the development of students according to their needs, potential, talents, and interests through activities organized by capable educators (Dermawan, 2013). Through these activities, it is hoped that students' abilities, social responsibility, and potential achievements will be enhanced.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the detailed description of various initiatives at Madrasah Aliyah Amsilati, this research concludes that the implementation of Islamic education significantly strengthens the social care character among students. Programs like *Damai Ati* (Islamic Converts Brotherhood Amsilati) not only

provide religious guidance but also encourage students to engage in compassionate acts, such as distributing necessities to converts, thereby reinforcing their social responsibility and empathy. Similarly, the *Obat Ati* initiative supports local traders by providing interest-free loans, combating the detrimental effects of high-interest lending on the community's economic welfare. The construction of artesian wells and the renovation of mosques and prayer rooms (Mushollas) further demonstrate a profound commitment to enhancing community well-being and infrastructure, illustrating the practical application of social care taught at the Madrasah. These initiatives instill values such as empathy, cooperation, and communal responsibility in students, aligning with the broader objectives of character education. However, the research acknowledges limitations, including the scope confined to a single institution, which may affect the generalizability of findings to other settings or regions, and the primarily qualitative assessment of character development, which might introduce subjective biases. Future research should expand to multiple educational institutions to compare the effectiveness of similar character education programs in different environments. Combining quantitative measures with qualitative analysis could provide a more robust assessment of these programs' impacts on student behavior. Investigating the long-term effects on alumni could also offer valuable insights into the sustainability of character development post-graduation.

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