

Developing Religious School Culture: Strategies and Impacts on Islamic Religious Education Outcomes

Latifatul Azizah¹, Saiful Amien², Moh. Nurhakim³

¹ Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang, Indonesia; bilgealfarros@gmail.com

² Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang, Indonesia; amien75@umm.ac.id

³ Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang, Indonesia; nurhakim@umm.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

Religious culture in schools plays a vital role in shaping students' moral character and supporting Islamic Religious Education (PAI) outcomes. This study explores the strategies used to develop religious school culture and evaluates their impact on students' character development and academic performance in PAI. A qualitative case study was conducted at SD Muhammadiyah 1 Ngimbang-Lamongan, involving 10 participants including the principal, PAI teachers, and parents. Data were collected through observations, in-depth interviews, document analysis, and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), then validated using source, technique, and time triangulation. Thematic analysis was conducted using Miles and Huberman's interactive model. The findings revealed four core strategies: (1) creating a religious atmosphere (e.g., playing Islamic songs and murottal), (2) modeling religious behavior by teachers, (3) habituating Islamic practices (e.g., congregational and Dhuha prayers, tahfidz, and the 5S culture), and (4) innovation in extracurricular programs (e.g., Muhadloroh, Hizbul Wathon). These strategies positively contributed to students' discipline, spiritual awareness, Qur'anic memorization, and mastery of PAI materials. Developing religious culture through structured and consistent strategies fosters both academic and character excellence. The findings confirm the importance of integrating Islamic values into daily school practices and highlight the role of teacher modeling and school-family collaboration in sustaining religious values.

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Corresponding Author:

Saiful Amien

Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang, Indonesia; amien75@umm.ac.id

1. INTRODUCTION

Religious culture is a fundamental aspect that significantly influences individual and collective character formation in society, particularly within the educational sphere. In schools, religious culture does not merely refer to a religious atmosphere; rather, it represents a deeply ingrained habit that permeates the daily activities of all school members, forming an integral part of the institution's identity (Khadavi, 2023). The development of religious culture occurs through sustained habituation, where a consistent religious environment is fostered over an extended period to build strong awareness and

commitment to practicing religious values in communal life (Ubabuddin et al., 2021). The continuation of religious practices thus transforms religious culture into the spiritual essence that drives behavior across the school community while simultaneously reinforcing the institutional identity of the school as a religiously oriented educational institution (Khadavi, 2023).

The formation of religious culture in the school environment can be analyzed at three interrelated levels. The first level pertains to values, including relationships with God, interactions with fellow humans, and connections with the surrounding natural environment. The second level involves behavior, encompassing daily traditions and habitual actions that reflect religious values, such as performing congregational prayers, engaging in acts of charity, and adopting noble attitudes and actions. The third level concerns cultural symbols, wherein cultural symbols or practices that do not align with religious teachings are replaced with those that reflect stronger religious principles (Ubabuddin et al., 2021). Together, these three dimensions establish a robust and holistic foundation for cultivating an authentic, comprehensive religious culture capable of enduring modern times' social and educational dynamics.

Human reliance on religion is an intrinsic need that transcends physical and material requirements. Religion serves as both a guideline for life and a basis for devotion, leading scholars to classify humans as *Homo religiosus*—beings who are inherently religious and require spirituality as an integral aspect of their existence (Stempsey, 2021). This perspective is reinforced by Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, which posits that after physiological and safety needs are fulfilled, humans seek love, esteem, and self-actualization. At the highest level, the need for spiritual fulfillment or transcendence emerges, wherein religious values contribute profoundly to an individual's psychological well-being (Maslow, 1943; Peterson & Park, 2010; Zalenski & Raspa, 2006; Carducci, 2020a, 2020b). Similarly, Al-Ghazali's thought underscores that nurturing the soul through spiritual education is essential to achieving balance and true happiness (Akib & Muhsin, 2019; Faqihuddin et al., 2025; Syahrizal, 2021). Therefore, religious education serves practical purposes and provides the spiritual nourishment that every individual deeply requires.

In Islamic education, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers play a strategic role as agents of change and facilitators of religious development in schools. Their duties extend beyond conveying religious materials in a textual manner; they also bear the responsibility of refining students' hearts so they continuously draw closer to Allah SWT (*taqorrub*) while inspiring a deep understanding and practical application of moral values in daily life (Simanjuntak et al., 2024; Maulidin et al., 2024). Within this framework, religious education's effectiveness hinges on teachers' ability to cultivate a comprehensive learning environment that seamlessly integrates theoretical knowledge with the lived practice of Islamic principles. This approach provides a strong foundation for fostering sustainable spiritual character among students.

Despite its significance, implementing religious culture in educational institutions still faces several challenges, necessitating systematic improvements in internalizing religious values (Anwar & Yunus, 2023; Rahim, 2024). The development of religious culture in schools is crucial as a pedagogical tool and as a primary function of schools—acting as social and cultural institutions that shape students' character and moral integrity (Ubabuddin et al., 2021). Schools serve as strategic spaces where religious values are instilled as foundational elements in forming noble character, offering solutions to the increasingly complex challenges of contemporary civilization and culture.

Islamic religious education faces diverse challenges, both internally and externally. It is frequently perceived as insufficient in fostering consistent religious attitudes and behaviors among students. Various factors contribute to this issue, including the dominance of materialism, consumerist tendencies, and hedonistic influences (Farooqi & Akram, 2024; Sadiq et al., 2020), alongside socio-cultural pressures (Boucher & Kucinskas, 2016) and secular education systems (Masuda & Yudhistira, 2020). Consequently, an effective and sustainable strategy for forming a religious culture must counteract these negative influences while nurturing a strong and resilient religious character.

A real-world example of religious culture implementation can be observed at SD Muhammadiyah 1 Ngimbang-Lamongan. Despite being located outside an urban center and near public schools, this institution exhibits remarkable competitiveness, demonstrated by its substantial student enrollment and impressive academic and religious achievements. The cultivation of religious culture in this school is reflected in its various activities, including congregational prayers, *Dhuha* prayers, *muroja'ah*, *tahfidz Juz 30*, memorization of daily *du'a* and *hadiths*, and the application of the 5S culture (*Senyum* [Smile], *Salam* [Greeting], *Sapa* [Salutation], *Sopan* [Courtesy], and *Santun* [Respect]). Additionally, the school actively organizes extracurricular programs, such as *Muhadloroh* (public speaking exercises), Islamic holiday celebrations, *Hizbul Wathon*, *Tapak Suci* (martial arts training), and applies the UMMI learning method, which is integrated into character education-based on *Mata Hati* principles. These implementations reflect the school's commitment to preserving deeply rooted religious values while developing them systematically to remain relevant and adaptable to contemporary educational landscapes.

Numerous previous studies have documented the positive impact of religious culture in transforming student behavior. For instance, improvements in prayer recitation skills, memorization of prayers and *hadiths*, and the internalization of religious values into daily life have been identified as key indicators of success (Anggraini & Fathiyatussholihah, 2024; Yunus & Sofa, 2025; Zulkarpian et al., 2024). The *Tahfidz Juz 30* program, for example, has been found to enhance discipline, consistency, and spiritual development, fostering perseverance and a stronger bond with religious principles (Hasanah & Haris, 2023; Ishak et al., 2022; Suryana et al., 2024). Meanwhile, the 5S culture has proven effective in promoting respect and ethical behavior toward teachers, reinforcing the values of mutual appreciation and courtesy (Hada & Erna, 2024; Zsantana & Suwanda, 2022).

Various scholarly works strengthen religious culture formation's conceptual and empirical foundations through Islamic Religious Education (PAI). Azizah et al. (2023) emphasize the importance of systematic lesson planning in shaping religious character within schools. Khomisah et al. (2024) highlight the role of PAI teachers in habituating religious culture at elementary and madrasa levels. Other studies focus on teacher strategies for developing religious consciousness through spiritual habituation and Islamic extracurricular activities (Khusnia et al., 2023; Sudarma & Riyanto, 2024). Research by Khoir et al. (2023) and Sodik et al. (2024) indicates that comprehensive implementation of PAI is a dominant factor in the systematic formation of religious culture.

Despite the extensive theoretical and empirical discussions surrounding religious culture in Islamic education, a significant gap persists in the literature regarding the holistic evaluation of religious culture strategies in schools. Previous research has often focused on theoretical discourse or partial assessments of religious practices without explicitly linking them to fundamental religious needs, as described in Maslow's need hierarchy and Al-Ghazali's thought. It opens new opportunities for an in-depth investigation into how religious culture strategies—when aligned with the intrinsic spiritual needs of individuals—can enhance the quality of Islamic Religious Education while fostering holistic character development among students.

Based on these phenomena, this study explores the strategies for developing religious culture at SD Muhammadiyah 1 Ngimbang-Lamongan. The primary objective is to identify the concrete efforts implemented in the school and to evaluate their impact on the improvement of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning quality and the formation of students' religious character. By integrating the perspective of general religious needs, as outlined in Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Al-Ghazali's thought insights, this research seeks to bridge the existing gap in the literature. It is expected that the findings of this study will not only enrich the theoretical foundation of religious education but also provide practical, applicable guidelines for other educational institutions in designing holistic and contextual learning programs.

2. METHODS

2.1 Approach and Type of Research

This study employs a qualitative approach using a case study method. The qualitative approach was chosen because it offers flexibility in exploring meanings, understanding contexts, and delving deeply into data related to strategies for developing religious culture and its contribution to Islamic Religious Education (PAI). In line with the definitions proposed by Busetto, Wick, and Gumbinger (2020) as well as Oranga and Matere (2023), this approach produces descriptive data in the form of language and behaviours that can be directly observed in the natural environment of the research subjects. The case study method was selected due to its suitability for investigating a phenomenon in depth within a real-world context (Yin, 2018). In this instance, SD Muhammadiyah 1 Ngimbang – Lamongan is a representative site because it has demonstrated integrating religious values into teaching practices and daily school life.

2.2 Participants

The research participants included the School Principal, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers, students, and parents. They were purposively selected due to their strategic roles in developing the school's religious culture. These groups can provide holistic information regarding the strategies, implementation, and impact of strengthening religious values within the school environment (Sargeant, 2012).

2.3 Ethical Considerations and Consent

Given that this study involves participants who are children, all research procedures adhered to stringent ethical standards. Ethical approval was obtained from the Research Ethics Committee of the Graduate Program at Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang prior to the commencement of the study. All participants received a detailed explanation regarding the purpose and objectives of the research and the methods of data collection to be employed. Written consent was obtained from parents or guardians as a form of informed consent, and the children involved were provided with explanations appropriate to their level of understanding so that they could also give their voluntary assent. Implementing these ethical principles ensures that the rights and well-being of the participants are protected throughout the research process.

2.4 Data Collection

Data were collected using four techniques: field observation, in-depth interviews, document analysis, and Focus Group Discussions (FGD). The researcher employed semi-structured interview guidelines, participatory observation sheets, and document checklists as data collection instruments. Interviews were conducted directly with key informants, while observations focused on the school's daily routines that reflect the students' religious practices (Creswell & Poth, 2016).

Data validity was assessed through a triangulation approach, which involved using various sources (informants), techniques (observation, interviews, documentation), and times (observations conducted under different circumstances). This method is consistent with data validation strategies in qualitative research (Doyle et al., 2020).

2.5 Data Processing and Analysis

For data analysis, this study adopts the interactive model proposed by Miles et al. (2014), which comprises four stages: data collection, data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing/verification. During the condensation stage, the raw data collected is systematically selected and summarized to be transformed into meaningful findings. The coded data is subsequently presented in narrative and matrix forms, facilitating the researcher's ability to identify and interpret patterns emerging from the dataset.

2.6 Data Coding

Data coding is performed manually to ensure the validity and consistency of the analysis. The researcher reviews each interview transcript, observation note, and relevant document, marking important segments by assigning code labels corresponding to the emerging themes. This process is iterative, involving continual review and revision of codes to ensure their appropriateness and accuracy. This manual coding technique enables the researcher to capture data nuances holistically, resulting in accurate and academically accountable findings (Saldana, 2013).

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Strategies for Forming a Religious Culture School

This study reveals that the efforts to establish a religious culture at SD Muhammadiyah 1 Ngimbang-Lamongan are carried out through a series of interrelated and integrated strategies. These strategies are symbolic and practically implemented in various operational activities within the school. The findings indicate the application of four strategic approaches: creating a religious atmosphere, modelling religious behaviour, habituating Islamic activities, and innovating through extracurricular programs and specialized teaching methods (Table 1).

Table 1. Strategies for Forming a Religious Culture School

No.	Strategies	Summary Description
1	Creating a Religious Atmosphere	Establishing an Islamic environment: playing nasyid in the morning and murottal during breaks.
2	Modeling Religious Behavior by Teachers	Teachers as role models: demonstrating discipline and courteous behaviour for students to emulate.
3	Habituation of Worship and Islamic Activities	Routine religious practices: congregational prayers, Dhuha prayers, muroja'ah, tahfidz, and the recitation of daily prayers/hadiths, along with the implementation of the 5S culture.
4	Innovation in Extracurricular and Teaching Methods	Innovative extracurricular programs and specialized teaching methods to reinforce Islamic values.

3.1.1 Creating a Religious Atmosphere

Establishing a religious atmosphere begins with the school principal's initiative, who ensures that all school spaces are designed to reflect Islamic values. For instance, Islamic songs (nasyid) are played every morning from 06:00 to 07:00 WIB, and murottal recitations are presented during break times (09:30 and 12:15 WIB). These activities maintain a continuous religious atmosphere, reinforcing spiritual awareness among students and staff. The principal explains that this approach aims to deepen spiritual consciousness, improve focus during worship, and promote inner peace.

3.1.2 Modelling Religious Behavior by Teacher

The findings emphasize the essential role of teachers, particularly Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers, in shaping a religious school culture through exemplary conduct. Teachers at SD Muhammadiyah 1 Ngimbang deliver religious material and embody Islamic values through discipline and courteous behaviour, serving as direct role models for students. One teacher remarked that providing an example is more impactful than offering long-winded advice, and continuous mentoring helps reinforce students' Islamic character. The principal also stated that exemplary leadership among

administrators and staff strengthens students' religious character, provided strategic programs are effectively implemented.

3.1.3 Habituation of Worship and Islamic Activities

Another crucial strategy is the systematic repetition of religious practices. These include congregational prayers, *Dhuha* prayers (held twice a week), *muroja'ah*, *tahfidz* of *Juz 30*, memorization of daily prayers and selected hadiths, and the implementation of the 5S culture (*Senyum* [smile], *Salam* [greeting], *Sapa* [salutation], *Sopan* [politeness], and *Santun* [courtesy]). These structured activities are designed as rituals and practical tools for internalizing Islamic values in students' daily lives, fostering strong Islamic character and thought patterns. A PAI teacher emphasized that the habitual recitation of prayers before and after lessons has a lasting impact on students, aiding the formation of a religious identity.

3.1.4 Innovation in Extracurricular and Teaching Methods

Beyond routine activities, the school integrates extracurricular programs that reinforce Islamic values. The *Muhadloroh* program, for instance, serves as public speaking training to develop students' *da'wah* skills and leadership qualities. Students practice speaking in proper Indonesian while incorporating religious messages. Celebrating Islamic holidays, such as *Isra' Mi'raj* and other major Islamic events, is enriched through creative competitions like Prophet biography storytelling contests and poster design competitions, which deepen historical knowledge and strengthen students' admiration for Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Other activities, such as *Hizbul Wathon* and *Tapak Suci*, cultivate discipline and leadership through Islamic-based martial arts training.

Additionally, the systematic application of the Ummi Method enhances Qur'anic memorization and *muroja'ah* through structured lesson scheduling for both students and teachers. A PAI teacher stated that these activities help students better understand the Prophet's life struggles, fostering a love for him and motivation in religious learning. Another PAI teacher highlighted that the school's extracurricular initiatives in *Hizbul Wathon* and *Tapak Suci* aim to nurture a generation that is physically strong and possesses good character and morals aligned with Islamic teachings.

3.2 Contribution of Religious Culture Formation to PAI Learning Process

The findings indicate that the strategies implemented to foster a religious school culture have significantly enhanced the quality of Islamic Religious Education learning. This contribution emerges from the synergy between internal aspects (values, attitudes, and behaviours) and establishing a holistic environment that supports Islamic activities (Table 2).

Table 2. Impact of Religious Culture Formation on PAI Learning Process

No.	Impact	Summary Description
1	Character Development and Moral Formation	Enhancing students' discipline, honesty, and tolerance through Islamic value internalization.
2	Strengthening Material Mastery and Qur'an Memorization	Deepening students' understanding of religious concepts and Qur'anic memorization through structured religious activities.
3	Developing Tolerance and Social Awareness	Creating a harmonious school environment emphasizing mutual respect and ethical social interactions.
4	Synergy between Teachers, School Leaders, and Parents	Strong collaboration between the school and families supports character development and academic success.

3.2.1 Character Development and Moral Formation

Efforts to internalize religious culture have played a crucial role in shaping students' moral character. Through continuous engagement in religious activities—including worship habits, Islamic extracurricular programs, and applying moral values—students have shown discipline, honesty, and responsibility improvements. PAI teachers emphasize that reinforcing moral character through role modelling and religious habituation has led to students becoming not only consistent worshippers but also individuals who demonstrate tolerance and empathy toward their social environment. Consequently, the religious culture cultivated in the school provides a strong foundation for holistic Islamic character development.

3.2.2 Strengthening Material Mastery and Qur'an Memorization

Another notable impact is improving students' academic achievements in Islamic Religious Education. Routine practices such as congregational prayers, murottal recitations, tahfidz, and muroja'ah have significantly enhanced students' mastery of religious content. Integrating interactive learning methods and the Ummi Method allows students to better comprehend and memorize Qur'anic verses. Additionally, instructional strategies incorporating intensive mentoring and periodic assessments have enriched the learning process, ensuring better retention and conceptual understanding of Islamic teachings.

3.2.3 Developing Tolerance and Social Awareness

Beyond academic benefits, religious culture formation has contributed to better social interactions within the school. Habituation activities, such as implementing the 5S culture, promote a harmonious environment where mutual respect and ethical values are prioritized. Teachers and educators encourage students to adopt tolerant attitudes, fostering an inclusive and supportive learning climate. Open discussion sessions and case studies help strengthen students' social awareness, enabling them to grasp the importance of unity and tolerance in daily life.

3.2.4 The synergy between Teachers, School Leaders, and Parents

Finally, the study highlights the collaboration between school leadership, teachers, and parents in successfully implementing religious culture. The principal sets a clear vision and policies, which teachers translate into daily learning activities and worship practices, while parental involvement reinforces character-building efforts at home. This synergy results in a holistic educational environment where Islamic values are taught theoretically and internalized through real-life actions. Furthermore, this cooperation fosters discipline and academic excellence, ensuring that Islamic Religious Education evolves comprehensively.

Discussion

The findings indicate that the school's initiatives—comprising the creation of a religious atmosphere, role modelling by teachers and school leaders, habituating Islamic rituals, and innovation through extracurricular programs and specialized teaching methods—significantly contribute to internalizing Islamic values. This case study supports previous research and offers new perspectives that complement and challenge existing literature.

Previous studies frequently highlight the importance of establishing a consistent religious environment in educational settings to foster students' intrinsic spiritual orientation (Ubabuddin et al., 2021; Khadavi, 2023; Suharyat et al., 2023). Within this research, the systematic approach to creating a

religious atmosphere provides a concrete example of the effectiveness of environmental stimuli in continuously reinforcing students' spiritual awareness.

Earlier research suggests that such practices enhance concentration and facilitate meditative conditions conducive to learning (Saraswati et al., 2018; Vice, 2023; Ansori, 2023; Ismatullah et al., 2024; Moroni, 2024). This study's findings support these arguments but further demonstrate that auditory stimuli, such as playing Islamic songs and reciting *murottal*, are not merely transient influences. Rather, they are part of a structured approach that generates long-term behavioural changes, both academically and socially.

Another key aspect emphasized in both this study and the literature is the role of teachers as exemplary figures (Imtihanudin & Mariana, 2021; Muqit & Maskur, 2022; Rifki et al., 2022; Rahmah, 2023; Lewin & Korsgaard, 2024). According to Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977), students tend to imitate behaviours exhibited by authority figures. This study underscores that continuous guidance must complement exemplary behaviour to realize its full impact. This finding challenges the notion that teacher conduct alone is sufficient; instead, ongoing reinforcement inside and outside the classroom proves more effective in shaping religious character.

Another fundamental component is the habituation of Islamic practices in daily routines. Activities such as congregational prayers, *Dhuha* prayers, *muroja'ah*, *tahfidz*, and the recitation of selected prayers and hadiths are integrated into the curriculum as a strategy for deeply instilling Islamic values. In alignment with constructivist theory (Vygotsky, 1978), repeated experiences support the automatic internalization of values, making religious practices an integral part of students' lives.

While previous studies acknowledge the role of habituation in character formation (Afriansyah et al., 2024; Romadani & Rustiani, 2024; Saputra et al., 2025; Kamila et al., 2025), this study adds further evidence that combining these practices with innovative learning strategies yields not only psychological benefits but also academic advancements.

Moreover, innovation in extracurricular activities and specialized teaching methods provides unique contributions to the educational framework (Armadi et al., 2024; Huda et al., 2024; Ismatullah et al., 2024; Pewangi et al., 2024; Salsabila et al., 2024; Sinta et al., 2024). Programs such as *Muhammadloroh*, *Hizbul Wathon*, and structured Qur'anic memorization initiatives demonstrate that physical, emotional, and intellectual development can be reinforced alongside Islamic values. The systematic application of *tahfidz* further supports the holistic internalization of religious principles (Afandi & Ningsih, 2023; Darmawan & Ramli, 2025; Wulandari & Mafariech, 2025). This approach challenges critiques considering extracurricular religious programs merely supplementary by illustrating their essential role in comprehensive character and competence development.

The synthesis of these strategies contributes significantly to existing literature (Aimah, 2023; Ismatullah et al., 2024; Nurizah & Amrullah, 2024; Wulandari & Amrullah, 2024) by bridging the gap between theoretical models and practical application. Earlier research provides strong theoretical foundations for religious culture formation through Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Fallatah & Syed, 2018; Rasli et al., 2022) and Al-Ghazali's thought (Gyagenda, 2021; Khosiin & Maulidiyah, 2022). However, it often lacks concrete linkages between school practices and broader socio-cultural dynamics. This case study demonstrates that when a school systematically integrates various strategies, the impact extends beyond individual practices, fostering academic success, strong moral character, and social integrity.

This research also challenges some established assumptions. While specific literature suggests that religious activities may be repetitive and of limited educational value, these findings indicate that structured repetition is key to creating long-term behavioural change. Routine practices such as congregational prayers and Qur'anic memorization fulfil religious obligations and serve as an educational strategy supporting intellectual and spiritual growth. The dual impact—improving academic outcomes while strengthening moral character—provides an empirical counterbalance to theories that separate religious education from academic achievement.

Another significant finding is the demonstrated synergy between school and home environments. Active collaboration among school leadership, teachers, and parents is crucial in establishing a holistic learning ecosystem. This approach ensures that religious values are reinforced in school and within the family structure. The partnership between schools and families aligns with previous literature on cross-sector collaboration (McCaleb, 2022; Gülboy, 2024; Tomashevskaya, 2024), highlighting the necessity of systematically integrating these partnerships into program design. The resulting learning environment allows academic and religious objectives to support one another, leading to more comprehensive student development.

Overall, the discussion emerging from this case study does not merely complement existing literature but expands our understanding of religious education. This research demonstrates that a multidimensional strategy—integrating religious atmosphere creation, teacher role modelling, habituation of worship, and innovation in extracurricular and teaching methodologies—not only enhances students' academic achievement and mastery of Islamic Religious Education but also significantly contributes to the development of moral character, tolerance, and social awareness.

Furthermore, this study challenges traditional assumptions that separate academic excellence from religious education. By illustrating that integrated efforts in religious culture formation can simultaneously strengthen both dimensions, it provides a foundation for a more holistic approach to curriculum development and instructional strategies at the school level. Findings regarding school-family synergy also highlight the need for more systematic collaborative approaches to optimize outcomes, ensuring a fully supportive and sustainable learning environment.

4. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the strategies for developing a religious culture at SD Muhammadiyah 1 Ngimbang-Lamongan encompass creating a religious atmosphere, strengthening the role of teachers as role models, habituating Islamic activities, and innovating through extracurricular programs and specialized teaching methods. Establishing this religious culture has significantly improved the quality of the PAI learning process and facilitated student character formation. The integration of these strategic approaches has proven to deepen mastery of religious content, enhance Qur'anic memorization, and foster discipline, honesty, tolerance, and social awareness, thereby yielding both academic and moral excellence.

Theoretically, this research reinforces the premise that religious culture is an essential component of character formation and religious mastery, addressing a gap in the literature that often lacks a holistic evaluation of such strategies. Practically, the model implemented in this study can serve as a blueprint for other educational institutions in designing holistic and contextually relevant learning programs. It is recommended that schools continue to develop innovative teaching methods that integrate Islamic values, expand the role of teachers as role models, and enhance the synergy between school and home environments to create a learning ecosystem that fully supports the internalization of religious values. Future research should broaden the scope by including various educational levels and regions and by investigating the long-term outcomes of religious culture implementation to gain deeper insights into the sustainability and replicability of the model.

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