

# Implementation of Islamic Religious Education in Shaping Students' Character at SMK PAB 2 Helvetia

## Implementasi Pendidikan Agama Islam dalam Pembentukan Karakter Siswa di SMK PAB 2 Helvetia

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### ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini membahas tentang pembentukan karakter siswa di SMK PAB 2 Helvetia. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis implementasi Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI) dalam pembentukan karakter siswa di SMK PAB 2 Helvetia. Pendidikan Agama Islam di sekolah ini diimplementasikan tidak hanya melalui pembelajaran di kelas, tetapi juga melalui kebiasaan keagamaan seperti membaca Al-Qur'an setiap Jumat, salat Dhuhr berjamaah, dan kebiasaan mengucapkan salam. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan teknik observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi untuk mendapatkan data yang mendalam. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa implementasi PAI berperan signifikan dalam membentuk karakter siswa melalui kegiatan keagamaan, keteladanan guru, dan kegiatan ekstrakurikuler keagamaan. Namun, keterbatasan metode pembelajaran yang masih dominan berbasis ceramah dan minimnya pemanfaatan media digital menjadi kendala. Oleh karena itu, inovasi pembelajaran berbasis teknologi dan penguatan peran guru sebagai teladan sangat dibutuhkan agar implementasi PAI lebih optimal dalam membentuk generasi yang berkarakter, berakhlak mulia, dan siap menghadapi tantangan masa depan..

### ABSTRACT

This study discusses the character formation of students at SMK PAB 2 Helvetia. This study aims to analyze the implementation of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in character formation of students at SMK PAB 2 Helvetia. Islamic Religious Education in this school is implemented not

only through classroom learning, but also through religious habits such as reading the Qur'an every Friday, congregational Dhuhr prayer, and the habit of saying salam. This study uses qualitative methods with observation, interview, and documentation techniques to obtain in-depth data. The results show that the implementation of PAI plays a significant role in shaping student character through religious activities, teacher role models, and religious extracurricular activities. However, the limitations of learning methods that are still predominantly lecture-based and the minimal use of digital media are obstacles. Therefore, technology-based learning innovations and strengthening the role of teachers as role models are urgently needed so that the implementation of PAI is more optimal in forming a generation with character, noble morals, and ready to face future challenges.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Character education is one of the strategic issues in the Indonesian education system, particularly in the midst of the rapid flow of globalization and the rapid development of information technology. Strong student character is needed so that they are able to face increasingly complex moral, social, and cultural challenges. According to the Ministry of Education and Culture, character education is a conscious and planned effort to instill noble values so that students possess good morals, excellent personality, and a sense of responsibility in social life (Kemendikbud, 2017). This indicates that character building cannot be separated from the educational process in schools.

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Islamic Religious Education (IRE) is one of the essential instruments in shaping students' character based on Islamic values. IRE does not only teach the cognitive aspect of religious knowledge but also habituates behaviors and attitudes in accordance with Islamic teachings (affective), as well as encourages worship skills (psychomotor). Lickona (2013) explains that effective character education must integrate these three aspects in order to produce individuals with integrity and responsibility. At SMK PAB 2 Helvetia, Islamic Religious Education is directed towards shaping students who are morally upright, socially responsible, and capable of becoming role models both within and outside the school environment. Although SMK PAB 2 Helvetia focuses more on field practices according to students' vocational areas, all students are still expected to have a strong understanding of religion to guide them in their future lives.

The implementation of IRE at SMK PAB 2 Helvetia is not only carried out in the classroom but also through religious habituation activities such as reading the Qur'an together before lessons begin, taking turns performing dhuha prayer, performing dhuhr prayer in congregation at the school mosque, and practicing greetings and prayers before and after learning. These activities aim to instill religious values, discipline, and togetherness among students, with IRE teachers playing a crucial role in guiding students effectively in shaping good morals and behavior through religious learning. So far, Islamic Religious Education has been too focused on delivering knowledge rather than facilitating the process of value transformation. Nurturing students with noble religious values encourages them to develop strong personalities and good morals (Nurshabrina et al., 2023). However, based on observations and previous studies, several problems in IRE at SMK PAB 2 Helvetia are still found. The problems can be seen in students' impolite behavior, lack of attention during lessons, and disregarding teachers' instructions. Considering that IRE aims to instill good morals, such behavior contradicts the purpose of learning. This issue is exacerbated by the dominance of lecture-based methods, which make learning less engaging and lead to passive students.

These problems require innovations in IRE learning so that the goals of character building can be optimally achieved. Teachers are expected to develop more interactive methods such as group discussions, simulations, educational games, and the use of digital media to increase student interest. The use of learning technologies such as digital Qur'an applications, instructional videos, and interactive quizzes can enhance student engagement while strengthening their understanding of IRE material. Effective strategies can make learning more efficient, targeted, and capable of producing results that align with expectations (Arsyad et al., 2023).

Based on the above explanation, this study aims to examine in depth how the implementation of IRE at SMK PAB 2 Helvetia contributes to the character development of students, as well as to identify the supporting and inhibiting factors. The results are expected to provide a real picture of effective IRE practices and serve as a reference for educators and schools in designing more innovative and relevant learning strategies in line with contemporary developments. Thus, IRE not only functions as a compulsory subject but also as a strategic medium in preparing young generations with strong character, noble morals, and the ability to adapt in the global era.

## 2. METHOD

This study adopted a qualitative research approach (Khodijah & Halili, 2023) with the purpose of providing an in-depth and holistic description of the phenomena observed in the field. Qualitative research emphasizes understanding the social and cultural context of the research subjects and analyzing conditions at the study site through detailed narrative accounts (Susanto et al., 2023). The collected data were systematically selected, examined, and presented to ensure validity and reliability.

Three main techniques were employed for data collection: observation, interviews, and documentation. Observation involved direct monitoring of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) learning activities in the classroom as well as religious practices outside the classroom. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with IRE teachers, guidance and counseling teachers, and students at SMK Swasta PAB 2 Helvetia in order to obtain comprehensive perspectives from multiple stakeholders. Documentation was used to collect supporting evidence such as lesson plans, student activity records, and institutional reports. The use of these three techniques simultaneously reflects the principle of data triangulation, which strengthens the credibility of the findings.

The data analysis process followed the interactive model of Miles and Huberman, which consists of three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction was carried out by categorizing and selecting relevant information based on the research focus. Subsequently, data were organized and presented in descriptive and thematic formats to facilitate interpretation. The final stage involved drawing conclusions, which were continuously verified against the data to maintain consistency and trustworthiness.

### **3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

#### **Religious Activities**

Every Friday morning, all students of SMK PAB 2 Helvetia participate in religious activities that begin with an MC-led opening, followed by Qur'an recitation, shalawat, and weekly rotating speeches delivered by different classes. These blessed morning activities aim to strengthen religious values and foster a spirit of togetherness. In addition to Friday morning religious programs, students are also accustomed to starting each lesson with prayers, Qur'an recitation, and dhikr during breaks in learning.

One of the school's flagship programs is the collective dhuhr prayer. All students are directed by teachers, under the supervision of the guidance and counseling (BK) teachers, to perform dhuhr prayer in congregation at the nearby mosque. This activity not only reinforces obedience to Allah but also strengthens brotherhood (ukhuwah) among the school community. Moreover, the habit of greeting teachers and peers with Islamic salutations is maintained consistently. Such greetings are not merely a form of communication but also serve as prayers and expressions of respect, cultivating respectfulness, intimacy, and a sense of fraternity within the school environment.

Overall, religious activities such as Friday morning programs, congregational dhuhr prayers, and Islamic greetings provide tangible contributions to students' character formation at SMK PAB 2 Helvetia. These strategies successfully cultivate religious, disciplined, and socially cohesive individuals.

#### **Role Modeling by Islamic Religious Education (IRE) Teachers**

Teacher role modeling is a key strategy in shaping student character through the implementation of Islamic Religious Education (IRE). At SMK PAB 2 Helvetia, IRE teachers act as primary role models, providing tangible examples through their daily conduct and attitudes. Their role fosters a learning environment that not only addresses the cognitive domain but also touches upon students' affective and psychomotor development. When teachers consistently demonstrate honesty, discipline, and responsibility, students are more likely to internalize these values, as they learn not only from theory but also from repeated real-life experiences.

Students at SMK PAB 2 Helvetia tend to imitate teachers' habits in terms of discipline, politeness, and devotion to worship. Several students even admitted being motivated to improve their character after witnessing their teachers' persistence in performing dhuha and congregational prayers. As highlighted by Syamsiar and Minarsih (2023), teacher role modeling plays a crucial role in education. Teachers are not only knowledge providers but also moral exemplars for students. Teachers with exemplary character earn students' respect and attention, thereby making the learning process more effective.

Furthermore, an effective teacher must possess a wide range of competencies, including pedagogical, personal, professional, social, subject-matter, managerial, educational technology, and assessment skills. The role of IRE teacher role modeling is therefore central to the implementation of character education. Its impact extends beyond students' religiosity to include social values such as responsibility, honesty, and empathy. The success of this strategy demonstrates that character formation cannot rely solely on instructional content but requires the consistent presence of role models within the school setting.

#### **Religious Extracurricular Activities**

Religious extracurricular activities at SMK PAB 2 Helvetia primarily include tahfiz programs conducted outside regular classroom sessions. These activities involve mastering makharij al-huruf and tajwid, muroja'ah, and Qur'an memorization. The makharij al-huruf and tajwid training sessions guide students in correctly pronouncing Arabic letters and applying proper recitation rules. Meanwhile,

muroja'ah or Qur'an review is an effective method to help students deepen their memorization while reinforcing proper articulation and comprehension.

Such extracurricular activities enhance students' intellectual abilities, instill discipline, and foster patience and perseverance in worship. The school fully supports these programs, recognizing its significant role in shaping students' character. According to Mas'ah et al. (2025), schools must ensure that extracurricular activities are well-designed, clearly goal-oriented, and adequately supported by resources. Qualified teachers and mentors are essential in providing appropriate guidance, enabling students to maximize the benefits of these programs. Collaboration with parents and the community is also vital: parents can provide moral and financial support, while the community can offer additional resources and opportunities for field-based activities.

Findings from this study reveal that religious extracurricular activities at SMK PAB 2 Helvetia play an important role in students' character development, despite challenges such as declining interest due to technological distractions. This issue does not only affect religious extracurricular programs but also other extracurricular activities. Therefore, schools must innovate by integrating digital tools to make religious extracurriculars more appealing and relevant to students' interests and needs. This aligns with Setiawan's (2022) findings, which show that digital media in religious learning significantly enhances students' motivation and engagement. Similarly, Savatari, Wanti, and Adedo (2024) emphasize that digital platforms expand access to religious educational resources. With internet-based content such as texts, videos, recordings, and interactive materials, learners and teachers can enrich their understanding of Islamic teachings beyond geographical limitations.

Thus, religious extracurricular programs at SMK PAB 2 Helvetia provide a concrete contribution to holistic character education, in line with the school's vision to cultivate a generation that is not only intellectually competent but also morally upright and socially responsible..

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

The implementation of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) at SMK PAB 2 Helvetia has proven to be quite effective in shaping students' character, particularly through religious habituation such as Qur'an recitation on Friday mornings, performing dhuhr prayer in congregation, and the practice of Islamic greetings. In addition, the exemplary behavior of IRE teachers—who are disciplined, respectful, and consistent in worship—plays a crucial role in fostering students' religiosity and discipline. This indicates that character education through IRE is not limited to the transfer of religious knowledge, but more importantly focuses on the formation of attitudes, habits, and real-life behaviors that cultivate morally upright individuals. By combining habituation and role modeling, the process of character education becomes more contextual and directly embedded in students' daily lives.

Nevertheless, the implementation of IRE in this school still faces challenges. Classroom learning tends to rely heavily on lecture-based methods and lacks the use of interactive digital media, which could otherwise increase students' interest, motivation, and engagement. Therefore, the school needs to innovate by integrating digital learning tools such as videos, interactive applications, and e-learning platforms to enrich students' learning experiences. Moreover, integrating IRE with other subjects and extracurricular activities can serve as a strategic step to broaden the scope of character development. Teachers across disciplines—not only IRE teachers—should also strive to become consistent role models, as teacher role modeling is the most effective factor that students tend to emulate. With these strategies, the implementation of IRE is expected to be effective not only in strengthening religiosity but also in fostering a generation with strong character, integrity, and readiness to face future challenges..

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