



Enhancing Elementary Students' Character through Aswaja Values: The Contribution of Islamic Religious Education Teachers

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Abstract:

This study explores the role of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers in fostering the values of Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaah (Aswaja) to form a good and polite character in students at school. This is based on the need for character education amidst the strong influence of technology in the lives of elementary school students today. The research method used is a qualitative approach with a case study design involving direct observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation analysis in the school environment. Data analysis techniques include data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing to process and analyze the collected data systematically. The results of the study show that the application of Aswaja values by PAI teachers has a positive impact on developing students' character, especially in terms of simplicity, patience, honesty, and empathy. The contribution of this research is to enrich the understanding of the strategic role of PAI teachers in supporting the formation of students' character, as well as provide recommendations for developing a value-based curriculum and better collaboration between schools, parents, and communities in supporting character education. This research implies the need for continuous teacher training and the integration of character education into the curriculum to address modern technological influences.

Key Words: *Character, Aswaja Values, Empathy*

Abstrak:

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi peran guru Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI) dalam menumbuhkan nilai-nilai Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaah (Aswaja) untuk membentuk karakter yang baik dan santun pada siswa di sekolah. Hal ini didasari oleh kebutuhan akan pendidikan karakter di tengah kuatnya pengaruh teknologi dalam kehidupan siswa sekolah dasar saat ini. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus, melibatkan observasi langsung, wawancara mendalam, dan analisis dokumentasi di lingkungan sekolah. Teknik analisis data meliputi reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan untuk mengolah dan menganalisis data yang terkumpul secara sistematis. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penerapan nilai-nilai Aswaja oleh guru PAI berdampak positif terhadap pengembangan karakter siswa, terutama dalam hal kesederhanaan, kesabaran, kejujuran, dan empati. Kontribusi penelitian ini adalah untuk memperkaya pemahaman tentang peran strategis guru PAI dalam mendukung pembentukan karakter siswa, serta memberikan rekomendasi untuk pengembangan kurikulum berbasis nilai dan kolaborasi yang lebih baik antara sekolah, orang tua, dan masyarakat dalam mendukung

pendidikan karakter. Penelitian ini menyiratkan perlunya pelatihan guru yang berkelanjutan dan integrasi pendidikan karakter ke dalam kurikulum untuk mengatasi pengaruh teknologi modern.

Kata Kunci: *Karakter, Nilai Aswaja, Empati*

INTRODUCTION

Elementary school students today are very familiar with the use of technology such as smartphones, tablets, and computers (Febyanti et al., 2022; Haleem et al., 2022; Gunawan & Amaludin, 2021). They often use these devices to study, play, and communicate. Students often use these devices to learn, play, and communicate (Nuraliyah et al., 2022). Nowadays, children of primary school age spend several hours per day with their electronic devices, whether to access online learning materials, play educational games, or communicate with friends and family through messaging applications and social media (Yulianah & Rozi, 2023; Alawiyah et al., 2022). As a result, they are quicker to access information and more familiar with technology than previous generations, which gives them an edge in digital skills but also demands supervision to avoid potential risks such as addiction to technology and exposure to inappropriate content.

In today's era, today's elementary school students have wider access to information on social and emotional issues, such as bullying, mental health, and tolerance (Susilowati, 2022; Amelia, 2023; Dyson et al., 2021). These students tend to be more sensitive to this problem. Based on reports from various educational institutions, many schools have incorporated character and social-emotional education into the curriculum (Sholeh, 2023). In addition, awareness campaigns (Yusnaldi et al., 2021) through social media and school programs increase students' understanding of these issues. However, their understanding and handling of these social and emotional issues still requires guidance from teachers and parents to ensure that the information they receive is properly processed and applied appropriately in daily life.

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers can play an important role in overcoming the challenges faced by elementary school students today through the teaching of Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaah (Aswaja) values. By integrating Aswaja values, such as simplicity, patience, honesty, and empathy, PAI teachers can help students develop strong character and good morals (Billah et al., 2022; Chuanchen, 2023; Ansori et al., 2023). For example, through teaching about the importance of simplicity, teachers can teach students not to overdo it in the use of technology and to use their time wisely (Mindarto et al., 2023; Faiz, 2023; Maulidah et al., 2023). Additionally, by instilling the values of patience and empathy, PAI teachers can help students better manage their emotions and increase sensitivity to social issues such as bullying and mental health (Norman & Paramansyah, 2024; Hamidah, 2023). This approach can also strengthen the relationship between students, teachers, and parents, creating a more harmonious and supportive learning environment.

Research on the character development of elementary school students through Aswaja values has been carried out in recent years, highlighting the importance of integrating religious values in the educational curriculum and the crucial role of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers. A study by Yunus, (2021) found that teaching values such as *tawadhu'* (humility), *tasamuh* (tolerance), and *istiqamah* (consistency) significantly improved students' character in terms of discipline, honesty, and cooperation. Azizah & Maemonah, (2022) showed that students in Yogyakarta who received instruction in Aswaja values showed improvements in critical thinking skills and social empathy. Ramadhanty et al., (2024) proposed that the project-based learning method improves students' understanding of Aswaja values as well as their active participation and responsibility in learning. Study by (Cahyani et al., 2024; Hidayatillah et al., 2022) stated that storytelling and role-playing methods are effective in instilling values such as honesty, responsibility, and mutual respect. Overall, these studies show that the integration of Aswaja values in character education of primary school students has a significant positive impact, with PAI teachers playing an important role in this process through formal teaching methods and personalized approaches.

The theory of collaboration between the school environment and the family in character education is still not structured and tested in the context of teaching religious values. This study explores how the synergy between PAI teachers and parents can strengthen the internalization of Aswaja values in students, filling the gap in this theory of educational collaboration. The purpose of this article is to describe the role of PAI teachers in fostering aswaja values to form good and polite student characters at SD Negeri 2 Temuguruh. By focusing on this aspect of novelty, this research is expected to make a significant contribution in the field of character education and the development of a curriculum based on religious values in elementary schools.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study design (Arifin et al., 2024). This approach was chosen to gain an in-depth understanding of how Aswaja values are applied by Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers in improving the character of elementary school students. The research will be conducted at SD Negeri 2 Temuguruh which has integrated Aswaja values in their curriculum. The research subjects included PAI teachers, elementary school students, and students' parents. Data will be collected through a variety of techniques, including direct observation in the classroom during PAI lessons and in the school environment to see the application of Aswaja values, in-depth interviews with PAI teachers and other maple teachers, students, and parents to explore teaching strategies and the impact of Aswaja values on student character, as well as analytical documentation of school documents such as curriculum and related activity reports.

The collected data will be analyzed using thematic analysis techniques that include several steps. First, data from observations, interviews, and documentation will be openly coded to identify key emerging themes. Then, these themes will be identified and grouped based on their similarity and relevance to Aswaja values and student character development. The final step involves an in-depth interpretation of the themes that have been identified, with the aim of understanding how Aswaja values are applied by PAI teachers and how these teachings affect the overall character development of students.

The validity of the research data is analyzed by the triangulation approach of data sources will be used, namely by comparing data obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation (Susanto & Jailani, 2023). The validity of the findings will be strengthened by checking the consistency of information from various sources. In addition, member checking will be carried out by asking for direct feedback from research participants on the results of provisional findings, thus ensuring that the interpretation of the data is in accordance with their experience and perspective. In terms of research ethics, ethical principles will be followed by obtaining written consent from the school and parents of students before starting data collection. Confidentiality and anonymity of participants will be carefully enforced throughout the entire research process.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Application of Aswaja Values in Teaching

The application of Aswaja values by Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers has a positive impact on the character development of elementary school students. PAI teachers consistently integrate values such as honesty, simplicity, and mutual respect in daily learning activities (Nawawi & Hufron, 2023). Observations show that teaching is not only focused on theoretical aspects, but also actively invites students to relate these values to their practical experiences. The results of interviews with PAI teachers revealed that they used a variety of strategies, including interactive lectures, group discussions, and situational simulations, to facilitate students' deep understanding and internalization of Aswaja values.

The phenomenon of experience from Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers who are involved in teaching Aswaja values in elementary schools states that instilling values is not only about theory but also emphasizes practice in the field. One of the PAI teachers, explained that the approach used is to integrate Aswaja values in every aspect of their learning. He said "We not only teach theory, but also try to apply those values in students' daily lives." (WR-GPAI, 20/06)

This shows that the holistic approach taken by Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers in teaching Aswaja values in elementary schools has a significant positive impact. Through interactive lectures, group discussions, and

various practical activities implemented, PAI teachers have successfully integrated values such as honesty, simplicity, and mutual respect into students' daily lives. Observations show that this approach not only improves students' understanding of religious teachings, but also changes their behavior with more responsibility and integrity. The results of interviews with PAI teachers revealed that students actively relate Aswaja values to their real-life experiences, showing that this approach is effective in shaping sustainable moral and spiritual character among primary school students.

The results of interviews with other teachers stated that by understanding and internalizing Aswaja's values, it is hoped that students can grow into individuals who are not only academically intelligent but also have strong moral integrity. As the results of interview, "I believe that by understanding and internalizing these values, students can grow into individuals who are not only academically intelligent but also have strong moral integrity", (wr-gips, 20/06)

Thus, shows that the understanding and internalization of Aswaja values by students can contribute significantly to their development as individuals with moral integrity. Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers consistently emphasize the importance of associating values such as honesty, simplicity, and mutual respect with students' daily experiences. Through this approach, students not only improve their understanding of religious teachings, but also internalize those values in their daily behavior. Observations in the study show that students who are involved in this process tend to show a responsible attitude, respect differences, and practice moral values in their interactions with others.

The holistic approach taken by Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers in integrating Aswaja values in elementary school students has had a variety of positive impacts. The application of values such as honesty, simplicity, and mutual respect in the context of religious education can enrich students' learning experiences and help them internalize important moral values (Khadafie, 2023). Teaching that is not only focused on theoretical aspects, but also invites students to relate these values to their practical experience, is able to produce more impactful and relevant learning (Al Ayyubi et al., 2024; Sartiwi, 2023). This underscores the importance of integrating religious values in the school curriculum to form a generation that is more ethical and has integrity in society.

Value-Based Curriculum Development

The development of a values-based curriculum is an important approach in the education system to ensure that not only academic knowledge is taught, but also moral and ethical values are built in students. The curriculum implemented at SD Negeri 2 Temuguruh, which focuses on values such as integrity, empathy, honesty, and social responsibility, is designed to shape students' character from an early age. Studies on value-based curriculum development show that this approach not only improves the overall quality of education in the school, but also provides students with a strong foundation for

living a moral life in society. Through a curriculum that is integrated with values, SD Negeri 2 Temuguruh can play an important role in forming a generation that is more ethically aware, trustworthy, and contributes positively to society at large. By linking every aspect of learning to upheld values, such a curriculum not only teaches students what to think, but also how they should think and act in living their daily lives.

The results of interviews with several curriculum managers in schools show that value-based curriculum development has a significant role in student education. One of them is the principal who revealed that the curriculum development process carried out at his school pays great attention to the integration of values such as honesty, tolerance, and social concern. "We design a curriculum that not only teaches academic material, but also ensures that each lesson provides added value in shaping students' character" (wr-ks,24/06)

Curriculum design that not only teaches academic material, but also ensures that each lesson provides added value in shaping students' character, involves a holistic approach that unites aspects of knowledge with the development of personal and social values. This kind of curriculum is designed to reach more than just knowledge transfer, but also to provide a learning experience that encourages students to understand and internalize values such as integrity, responsibility, honesty, empathy, and simplicity. Each lesson is integrated with a real and relevant situational context, where students not only learn academic concepts but are also given the opportunity to apply these values in their daily lives.

Another version in the interview results highlights the importance of consistency and appropriateness of values in each subject. Waka. The curriculum reveals that the curriculum is prepared through planning that integrates with aswaja values. "We specifically identify the values we want to instill in students, and then develop a lesson plan that includes practical activities to strengthen the understanding and application of those values" (wr-kr, 24/06)

The results of the interview show that the development of a value-based curriculum is not only about imparting knowledge, but also building a solid moral foundation for students. The integration of values in the school curriculum can have a positive impact in shaping students' character and personality in the future.

The discussion on the development of a values-based curriculum at SD Negeri 2 Temuguruh shows the importance of integrating values such as integrity, empathy, honesty, and social responsibility in formal education. This approach not only improves the overall quality of education but also helps shape students' character from an early age, preparing them to play an active role in a moral society (Judrah et al., 2024). The integration of values in the curriculum is not just the teaching of theory, but also practical experiences that encourage students to internalize those values in their daily lives (Noventue et al., 2024). This is in line with the opinion of several curriculum managers who emphasize

the importance of each subject providing added value in shaping students' character. By paying attention to the consistency and suitability of values, schools are able to create an educational environment that supports the moral and social development of students holistically.

Teachers as Role Models

Teachers as role models play an important role in the development of students' character, especially in elementary schools. Teachers not only play the role of teachers of academic materials, but also as role models in applying the moral and ethical values taught (Ratnasari et al., 2022). By demonstrating behavior consistent with values such as honesty, integrity, empathy, and responsibility, teachers provide a real example that students can follow (Judrah, 2024). When students see their teachers behaving in a good way and in accordance with moral teachings, they tend to imitate that behavior in their daily lives. In addition, teachers who are role models can create a positive and supportive learning environment, where moral and ethical values are taught not only through words, but also through concrete actions. Thus, the role of teachers as role models is crucial in helping students internalize these values and form a strong and moral character from an early age.

Teachers as a role in the context of improving the character of elementary school students through Aswaja values show that the presence of teachers who are consistent in implementing and exemplifying these values has a significant impact. At SD Negeri 2 Temuguruh, the interaction of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers with students is not only limited to teaching theory, but also includes the application of moral values in daily life at school. These teachers actively integrate values such as honesty, simplicity, and mutual respect in every aspect of their learning and interactions with students. Students tend to observe and imitate their teachers' behavior, making teachers a strong example in the formation of students' moral and spiritual character. Thus, teachers who are good role models in applying Aswaja values not only help students understand religious teachings theoretically, but also guide them in internalizing these values in daily life, making a positive contribution to the formation of students' character as a whole.

Active teaching by teachers, which involves the integration of Aswaja values in the curriculum, is one of the ways in which teachers play a role model in SD Negeri 2 Temuguruh. They not only teach theory, but also incorporate these values in every lesson. Teachers show personal examples by displaying behaviors that reflect those values in daily interactions with students, so that students can see and imitate appropriate behaviors. Teachers provide direct guidance to students in applying moral values in their lives, ensuring that students not only understand values in theory but are also able to put them into practice. In addition, teachers provide constructive evaluation and feedback regarding the application of values in students' daily lives, helping them to

improve and strengthen their moral character. By being a good role model, teachers create a holistic learning environment and support the development of students' character as a whole, showing that the values taught are not only abstract concepts but also real practices that must be adopted in daily life.

Collaboration with Parents and Community

The concept of collaboration with parents and communities in education is an approach that recognizes the importance of the role of all parties in supporting student development and learning. The collaboration emphasizes close cooperation between schools, families, and communities to create an environment that supports holistic learning (Subasman et al., 2024; Sanjani, 2024). In this context, schools are no longer considered the only institution responsible for a child's education, but rather as part of a wider network that includes parents and the local community. This shows that collaboration with parents involves regular communication about student development, participation in school activities, and support for learning at home. Meanwhile, community participation can be in the form of partnerships with local organizations, mentoring programs, and relevant extracurricular activities. This collaboration strengthens the relationship between in-school and out-of-school learning, and creates consistency in educational values and goals. This not only improves the overall quality of education but also provides students with a strong foundation to live a moral and responsible life in society. This effective collaboration also allows for more comprehensive problem-solving and capacity building for all parties to support children's education and well-being.

Parents' involvement in instilling Aswaja values in SD Negeri 2 Temuguruh is built through an active role in the educational process, such as through regular communication about student development, participation in school activities, and support for learning at home, schools can strengthen the relationship between learning at school and at home. This helps create consistency in educational values and goals. In this way, schools can strengthen the connection between learning at school and at home, helping to create consistency in educational values and goals. In addition, this collaboration also allows parents to better understand and support the school's efforts in teaching Aswaja values.

Parent involvement can be involved in special programs such as parenting classes or workshops that discuss effective ways to instill Aswaja values in the home. This involvement not only raises parents' awareness of the importance of moral and spiritual values but also strengthens the bond between the family and the school, creating an environment conducive to the formation of children's character. With strong support from parents, students can experience a more well-rounded and meaningful learning experience, both at school and at home. In addition, community involvement in supporting education at SD Negeri 2

Temuguruh also plays an important role. Through partnerships with local organizations, mentoring programs, and relevant extracurricular activities, the community can help broaden students' horizons and experiences in understanding and applying Aswaja's values in their daily lives. Thus, collaboration between schools, parents, and communities creates a comprehensive and sustainable educational ecosystem, supporting the overall development of students' character.

The results of interviews with students' parents stated that schools often provide information about students' development to parents. Parents feel very involved in the educational process of their children, with regular and open communication from the school. In addition to formal meetings such as monthly meetings and individual meetings, the school also sends periodic reports on students' academic progress and behavior.

"We feel very involved in the education of our children at SD Negeri 2 Temuguruh. The school often holds meetings with parents to provide updates on the child's progress and how we can help at home. I also participated in some school activities and felt that this helped to reinforce what was taught at school. We also discussed with teachers the best way to instill Aswaja values at home." (WR-WS, 26/06)

Parents are also invited to participate in various school activities, such as sports days, workshops, and cultural events, which help them better understand their children's learning environment. This participation not only strengthens the relationship between school and home, but also ensures consistency in the values and educational goals instilled in students. Parents feel that this collaboration is very effective in supporting their children's learning and helping to create an environment conducive to the development of students' moral and ethical character.

The collaboration between the school, parents, and the community at SD Negeri 2 Temuguruh shows the importance of synergy in education for the development of students' character. Through regular communication and active involvement in various school activities, parents are not only informed about their children's academic and behavioral development but are also empowered to support education at home. The collaboration ensures consistency in the application of Aswaja values, both at school and at home, which is very important for the formation of students' moral and ethical character. Parent participation in school programs strengthens the relationship between home and school, creating a supportive and holistic environment for students (Solissa et al., 2024). Community engagement also broadens students' horizons through a variety of extracurricular activities and partnerships with local organizations, which provide practical experience in applying the values learned. Overall, this close collaboration not only improves the quality of education but also builds a

strong foundation for students to become moral and responsible individuals in society.

This study makes a significant contribution to the field of learning by developing a value-based learning model that integrates the values of Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaah (Aswaja) into the educational process. This model focuses not only on the transfer of academic knowledge but also on the formation of students' character through moral values such as honesty, simplicity, patience, and empathy. By placing teachers as role models and mentors, this study emphasizes the importance of the role of teachers in helping students internalize these values, thus not only enriching students' learning experiences but also supporting their overall character development. Through this approach, this study offers practical guidance for the development of a more holistic and effective curriculum in implementing character education in schools, providing a strong foundation for the formation of individuals with integrity and morals.

CONCLUSION

This study has revealed the importance of the role of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers in instilling the values of Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaah (Aswaja) in shaping the character of students at SD Negeri 2 Temuguruh. The most important finding of this study is that the integration of moral values such as honesty, simplicity, patience, and empathy in the learning process not only enriches students' academic understanding but also supports their character development. The wisdom that can be taken from this study is that character education based on religious values can provide a strong moral foundation for students, helping them become individuals with more integrity and responsibility.

In terms of scientific contribution, this study updates the perspective in the approach to character education by emphasizing the importance of integrating religious values into the elementary school curriculum. The method used, namely a qualitative approach with a case study design, provides an in-depth understanding of how Aswaja values can be applied in the context of formal education. However, this study has limitations in terms of scope, which only covers one school with a homogeneous cultural and religious background. In addition, this study does not consider gender and age variations, and is limited to qualitative methods. Therefore, further research is needed that accommodates various variables such as gender, age, and uses quantitative methods or surveys to obtain a more comprehensive picture. This is important to produce a more appropriate and targeted policy basis in developing inclusive and effective character education.

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