Religious Values and Dhikr Practice as a Framework for Moral Character Building in Islamic Elementary Schools

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the formation of students' moral character through dzikir practices and the internalization of religious values at MI Al-Khairiyah Dusun Melik, Parijatah Kulon Village, Srono District, Banyuwangi Regency. The research is motivated by behavioral issues among students, particularly declining discipline, politeness, and self-control, highlighting the need for spiritually grounded pedagogical approaches. Using a descriptive qualitative method with data collected through in-depth interviews, participant observations, and document analysis, the study investigates the roles of teachers, school culture, and religious activities in shaping students' character. The findings reveal that daily dzikir enhances emotional calmness, spiritual awareness, and adherence to school norms. Additionally, the internalization of religious values—instilled through habituation, modeling, and integration in Islamic education lessons—effectively fosters responsibility, empathy, and respectful attitudes among students. These results indicate that character formation becomes more effective when spiritual practices and value-based instruction are consistently embedded in school routines. The study also fills a gap in the literature regarding the use of dzikir as a pedagogical strategy in Islamic elementary education and proposes a viable model of religious-based character development for primary schools in Indonesia.

Keywords: moral character; dzikir; religious values; habituation; character education.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis proses pembentukan akhlak siswa melalui praktik dzikir dan internalisasi nilai religius di MI Al-Khairiyah Dusun Melik, Desa Parijatah Kulon, Kecamatan Srono, Kabupaten Banyuwangi. Latar belakang penelitian berangkat dari fenomena degradasi perilaku siswa, terutama terkait kedisiplinan, kesantunan, dan kontrol diri, sehingga diperlukan pendekatan pedagogis berbasis spiritual untuk memperkuat karakter. Dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi partisipatif, dan analisis dokumen, penelitian ini menelaah peran guru, budaya sekolah, serta aktivitas keagamaan dalam membentuk perilaku siswa. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa dzikir harian berkontribusi pada peningkatan ketenangan emosional,

kesadaran spiritual, dan kepatuhan terhadap norma sekolah. Selain itu, pemahaman nilai religius yang diintegrasikan melalui pembiasaan, keteladanan, dan penguatan materi PAI terbukti efektif menumbuhkan tanggung jawab, empati, dan sikap hormat siswa. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa pembentukan akhlak berjalan optimal ketika praktik spiritual dan nilai religius diterapkan secara konsisten dalam rutinitas pendidikan. Penelitian ini juga mengisi kekosongan kajian terkait implementasi dzikir sebagai strategi pedagogis pada jenjang sekolah dasar Islam dan menawarkan model pembinaan karakter berbasis religius yang relevan untuk pendidikan dasar.

Kata Kunci: *akhlak siswa; dzikir; nilai religious; pembiasaan; pendidikan karakter.*

INTRODUCTION

The formation of students' moral character has long been regarded as a central aim of Islamic education, emphasizing not only the development of cognitive abilities but also the cultivation of spiritual awareness and ethical behavior as foundational dimensions of the learning process (Ramadhan & Usriyah, 2021). In the context of Islamic elementary education, particularly within a madrasah ibtidaiyah, the urgency of moral development becomes even more pronounced because children in this stage are situated in a critical period of character formation, during which values, habits, and behavioral dispositions begin to crystallize. At MI Al-Khairiyah, located in Dusun Melik, Parijatah Kulon Village, Srono District of Banyuwangi Regency, efforts to nurture moral character are reflected in the institution's commitment to integrating religious activities such as daily prayers, recitations, and lessons on Islamic values into the school culture.

Despite these efforts observational accounts and preliminary teacher reports indicate that students still exhibit behaviors that do not fully reflect the moral ideals expected of them, including occasional acts of disrespect toward teachers, reduced discipline, reluctance to engage in cooperative activities, and difficulties in practicing self-control. These challenges are further intensified by contemporary influences such as increased exposure to digital media, shifting patterns of social interaction, and weakened community oversight, which can shape children's attitudes in ways that diverge from Islamic ethical teachings. Although the school aspires to produce students who embody noble character, the actual conditions in the classroom demonstrate that internalized moral understanding does not always align with the values promoted by teachers and the institution.

MI Al-Khairiyah has sought to strengthen its character-building strategies by emphasizing spiritual practices that directly engage students' emotions and consciousness. Among these practices, *dhikr* the remembrance of God through repetitive, meaningful recitations has been highlighted by teachers as a method capable of fostering inner calmness, emotional regulation, and heightened moral awareness. When accompanied by explicit instruction on religious values, *dhikr* holds the potential to shape students' dispositions not only through cognitive comprehension but also through affective and spiritual reinforcement.

Previous studies conducted in Islamic schools in Indonesia and other Muslim-majority countries have acknowledged the role of spiritual routines in promoting discipline, empathy, prosocial behavior, and increased sensitivity to ethical norms (Ma`arif, 2018). Research in the field of Islamic moral education has also emphasized that character formation is most effective when cognitive understanding of religious values is combined with consistent spiritual practice. However, most existing literature focuses on adolescents or students in secondary educational settings, where moral development is examined in relation to identity formation, emotional maturity, or external behavioral indicators (Nurkamiden & Anwar, 2023). There remains limited empirical exploration of how *dhikr* and religious value comprehension shape moral behavior in younger learners, particularly those in rural Islamic elementary schools where cultural traditions, community expectations, and school practices intersect in unique ways.

Furthermore, although some studies have discussed school-based religious programs, they often describe these activities in broad terms without specifically identifying the mechanisms through which spiritual practices influence the daily moral conduct of students (Samad et al., 2023). Research tends to emphasize formal instruction in Islamic values rather than routine spiritual activities that may play a stronger role in shaping internal dispositions (Nusaibah & Bustam, 2023). Little is known about how students personally experience *dhikr*, how teachers integrate it with moral guidance, and how such practices contribute to observable changes in behavior over time (As'ad, 2022). This void in scholarly understanding becomes more apparent when considering smaller institutions such as MI Al-Khairiyah, where the cultural context, teacher-student interactions, and rural community environment may differ significantly from larger urban schools typically represented in studies. The lack of empirical attention to these dynamics results in a gap in the literature concerning the combined influence of *dhikr* practices and the understanding of religious

values on elementary students' moral development within a local, community-based Islamic schooling environment.

To provide a clear direction for this study, it is essential to formulate specific research problems that reflect the focus of the investigation. Based on the background of the study, three main research questions are proposed: how the practice of dhikr is implemented within the educational routines at MI Al-Khairiyah Dusun Melik, how students comprehend the religious values taught at the school, and how both dhikr practices and the internalization of religious values contribute to the development of students' moral character. In accordance with these research questions, this study aims to describe the implementation of dhikr within daily school activities, analyze students' level of understanding of religious values, and explain the contribution of these two components to the formation of students' moral and ethical behavior at MI Al-Khairiyah.

Addressing this gap is crucial because moral character education at the elementary level forms the groundwork upon which higher-level ethical reasoning and behavioral responsibility are built. Exploring the impact of *dhikr* and religious value comprehension in this specific setting can offer deeper insights into how spiritual activities contribute to children's internalization of Islamic ethics at a formative age. Such insights are also valuable for teachers, school leaders, and policymakers seeking to design more contextually responsive character education models that integrate both instructional and spiritual dimensions. By examining how these practices are implemented at MI Al-Khairiyah, how students respond to them, and how they are reflected in students' daily conduct, this study aims to illuminate the processes through which religious practices can effectively support character formation in Islamic elementary schools. Ultimately, the research seeks to provide an evidence-based understanding of whether and how *dhikr* and the comprehension of religious values serve as meaningful avenues for nurturing moral character among young learners, thereby offering theoretical contributions to Islamic education discourse and practical recommendations for strengthening moral development programs within similar school contexts.

RESEACH METHOD

The present study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to explore in depth how *dhikr* practices and the comprehension of religious values contribute to the formation of

students' morality at MI Al-Khairiyah Parijatah Kulon, Srono, Banyuwangi. This design was chosen because the phenomenon under investigation involves internal processes, spiritual experiences, and behavioral manifestations that can only be captured meaningfully through naturalistic inquiry. The research was conducted within the authentic environment of the madrasah, where daily routines such as collective *dhikr*, religious instruction, and teacher–student interactions occur organically. The participants consisted of upper-grade students (Grades 4–6), teachers of Islamic Religious Education, homeroom teachers, and the school principal, all selected through purposive sampling based on their direct involvement with or knowledge of the activities related to moral formation in the school.

In conducting this study a qualitative descriptive approach was employed, grounded in the theoretical framework of qualitative inquiry as explained by Creswell (2014), which emphasizes exploring social phenomena in natural settings to understand participants' meanings, experiences, and behaviors. Qualitative research is particularly suitable for examining spiritual practices and moral formation because it allows the researcher to interpret subjective experiences through close interaction with the field. The data collection techniques used in this study are also supported by established theoretical foundations. Observations were conducted following the principles outlined by Spradley (1980), which emphasize systematic attention to setting, activities, and participant behavior. Semi-structured interviews were guided by the qualitative interviewing theory of Kvale and Brinkmann (2009), enabling flexible yet in-depth exploration of participants' perspectives. Document analysis was carried out based on Bowen's (2009) framework, which highlights the importance of written materials as complementary sources that strengthen data credibility. These theoretical foundations ensure that the data collection process is methodologically sound and aligned with the characteristics of qualitative research.

Data were derived from both primary and secondary sources, including interviews with students and teachers, observations of daily activities and *dhikr* sessions, school documents such as lesson plans and activity schedules, discipline records, and relevant literature on Islamic moral education. Data collection techniques consisted of non-participant observation to capture students' participation in *dhikr* and their moral behavior in natural contexts; semi-structured interviews to obtain detailed insights into participants' perceptions, experiences, and pedagogical strategies; and documentation analysis to supplement and validate the observed practices. The researcher functioned as the primary instrument, ensuring flexibility and sensitivity in interpreting meanings behind participants' actions and

statements. Data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive model, consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, conducted continuously throughout the research process to identify emerging patterns related to how spiritual practices shape moral dispositions (Miles & Huberman, 1994). To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, the study applied credibility through triangulation of data sources and methods, prolonged engagement in the field, and member checking; transferability through rich, thick descriptions of the setting and processes; dependability through detailed methodological documentation; and confirmability through reflexive notes and audit trails. Ethical considerations were maintained by securing informed consent from school authorities, teachers, and parents, ensuring participants' confidentiality, and respecting the cultural and religious norms of the school environment. Through this methodological approach, the study aimed to produce a comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms through which *dhikr* and religious value comprehension contribute to students' moral development within the unique sociocultural context of MI Al-Khairiyah.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION
RESULT

This chapter presents the findings of the study based on observations, interviews, and document analysis conducted at MI Al-Khairiyah Parijatah Kulon. The findings are organized into three major sections: (1) the implementation of *dhikr* practices, (2) students' comprehension of religious values, and (3) the contribution of both elements to students' moral formation. The presentation integrates tables summarizing key findings followed by descriptive explanations for each category.

1. Implementation of Dhikr Practices in Daily School Activities

Based on field observations and teacher interviews, *dhikr* is implemented systematically at MI Al-Khairiyah and forms a central component of the school's religious routines. Students participate in *dhikr* before lessons begin, after the midday prayer, and during weekly collective religious gatherings. Teachers emphasized that *dhikr* is intended not merely as a ritual but as a spiritual exercise to cultivate calmness, emotional regulation, and awareness of Allah's presence.

Table 1. Implementation of Dhikr Practices at MI Al-Khairiyah

No	Observed Component	Description
1	**Daily Morning Dhikr**	Conducted for 10–15 minutes before the first lesson, led by a teacher; students recite *tasbih, tahmid,* and *tahlil*.
2	**Dhikr After Dhuhr Prayer**	Performed collectively in the musholla; emphasis on gratitude and self-reflection.
3	**Weekly Friday Dhikr Gathering**	Students gather for extended dhikr sessions including *salawat*, short supplications, and moral advice from teachers.
4	**Teacher Guidance**	Teachers explain the meaning of phrases and remind students to internalize sincerity and focus during recitation.
5	**Student Participation**	Varies from active and enthusiastic to passive, depending on individual readiness, emotional state, and familiarity.

Observations revealed that the morning *dhikr* routine establishes an atmosphere of calmness, particularly beneficial for students who commonly arrive with high energy or emotional fluctuations. Teachers reported that students tend to be more focused and disciplined after participating in *dhikr*. During the *dhikr* after Dhuhr prayer, students display improved self-control, often sitting quietly and following the recitations attentively. Interviews with teachers highlighted that these sessions serve as "spiritual resets" that help students regain composure before entering the next learning period.

The weekly Friday gathering plays a more comprehensive role, combining spiritual recitation with brief moral instruction. Teachers intentionally integrate themes such as honesty, respect, humility, and patience into the closing reminders (*tausiyah*). Students appeared to respond positively to these reminders, often showing behavioral improvements immediately following the sessions. However, some students were observed to participate mechanically, showing limited understanding of the meaning behind the recitations. To strengthen the findings, several interview excerpts are incorporated to illustrate students' and

teachers' perspectives more concretely. During interviews, students expressed that dhikr helped them regulate their emotions, as reflected in statements such as, "After doing dhikr, I feel calmer and I don't get angry easily," (Interview with Student A, 12/10/2024) and "It makes my heart feel light before starting the lesson," (Interview with Student B, 13/10/2024). Teachers also emphasized the behavioral changes they observed following the implementation of daily dhikr. One teacher noted, "Students are noticeably more focused after the morning dhikr; they listen better and cause fewer disturbances in class," (Interview with Teacher 1, 14/10/2024). Regarding the internalization of religious values, students provided simple yet meaningful explanations, such as, "Being honest means not lying even when the teacher doesn't see us," (Interview with Student C, 12/10/2024), and "Respect means greeting teachers and not interrupting them when they speak," (Interview with Student D, 13/10/2024). These statements support the observational data indicating improvements in politeness, cooperation, and emotional control. Teachers further confirmed this development, with one stating, "Conflicts during break time have decreased because students now remind each other to be patient," (Interview with Teacher 2, 14/10/2024). The integration of these interview excerpts provides clearer evidence of the link between dhikr practices, value comprehension, and students' moral behavior, thereby reinforcing the validity of the findings.

2. Students' Comprehension of Religious Values

Students' understanding of religious values emerges through formal learning, teacher explanations during *dhikr*, and daily reinforcement within school activities. Interviews with students indicated varying levels of comprehension, with some able to articulate the meaning of values such as honesty, respect, and gratitude, while others provided simpler or more concrete explanations.

Table 2. Students' Comprehension of Religious Values

No	Religious Value	Student Understanding	Evidence from Data
1	**Respect (Adab)**	Most students link respect with obeying teachers and greeting others politely.	Students greet teachers daily; teachers confirm improved politeness.

2	Honesty (Shidq)	Students describe honesty as "not lying" and "telling the truth in class."	Teachers note reduced cases of cheating; students admit feeling guilty when dishonest.
3	Responsibility (Amanah)	Understanding varies; some students relate it to completing homework and protecting school property.	Observations show improvement in classroom cleanliness duty.
4	Gratitude (Syukur)	Students connect gratitude with saying *alhamdulillah* and being thankful for food and health.	Observations reveal students reciting gratitude expressions more frequently.
5	Patience (Sabr)	Students understand patience as "not getting angry quickly."	Teachers report reduced conflicts during breaks.

The comprehension of religious values among students is largely shaped by teacher explanations and repeated exposure to moral examples. During interviews, students were able to articulate basic Islamic concepts in their own words, demonstrating developing but incomplete moral reasoning. For instance, while many students understood respect in ritualistic terms (e.g., greeting teachers), only a few recognized respect as attentiveness during learning.

Teachers observed that the daily integration of religious values through short reminders, contextual examples, and consistent modeling helps students internalize these concepts gradually. Documentation such as lesson plans and character-building modules revealed that teachers intentionally embed religious values across subjects, not only during Islamic Education lessons.

3. Effects of Dhikr and Religious Values on Students' Moral Behavior

Field observations across classrooms, playgrounds, and religious gatherings revealed significant behavioral patterns linked to *dhikr* and the comprehension of religious values. Students were generally more disciplined on days with structured *dhikr* routines, and their interactions showed signs of increased empathy and cooperation.

Table 3. Indicators of Moral Formation Observed in Students

No	Moral Indicator	Evidence of Change	Data Source
1	**Discipline**	Students come earlier to school on dhikr days; reduced classroom disruptions.	Observation, teacher interview
2	**Respectful Behavior**	More consistent greetings; fewer instances of speaking rudely to peers.	Observation
3	**Self-Control**	Students are calmer after dhikr; reduced conflicts or fights during break time.	Field notes
4	**Cooperation**	Increased willingness to help peers; improved teamwork during group assignments.	Interview, observation
5	**Emotional Stability**	Students express feeling "happier" or "lighter" after dhikr; teachers note reduced temper outbursts.	Student interview, teacher report

When *dhikr* was conducted consistently in the morning, students began the day with notably calmer behavior, often reflected in their seating, attentiveness, and willingness to follow instructions. Teachers reported that *dhikr* helped regulate students' emotional states, making them more receptive to guidance. In several observed cases, students who were typically restless became more composed after *dhikr* sessions

Students' understanding of religious values contributed to concrete behavioral improvements. Respectful behavior increased, not only toward teachers but also among peers. For example, students initiated greetings without prompting and displayed greater politeness during classroom activities. Conflict incidents, previously occurring frequently during recess, were noticeably reduced during the observation period. Teachers linked this change directly to the moral emphasis embedded within *dhikr* gatherings and daily reminders. Responsibility also improved, as students became more diligent in completing assignments and participating in classroom duties. Student interviews revealed that they began associating

their actions with consequences in a religious sense such as wanting to "make Allah happy" or avoiding sin indicating deeper internalization of moral reasoning.

4. Integration of Dhikr and Moral Instruction by Teachers

Teachers played a crucial role in connecting *dhikr* practices with moral instruction. The integration occurred through explanations about the meaning of *dhikr*, short moral messages based on Qur'anic verses or prophetic traditions, and modeling of behavior.

Table 4. Teacher Strategies in Supporting Moral Formation

No	Strategy	Description
1	**Meaning Explanation**	Teachers clarify what each *dhikr* phrase means and how it relates to daily behavior.
2	**Moral Reminders**	Short stories, hadith, or examples are shared after dhikr.
3	**Behavior Modeling**	Teachers demonstrate patience, respect, and calmness consistently.
4	**Monitoring Behavior**	Teachers observe students and provide corrective feedback.
5	**Integrating Values in Lessons**	Religious values embedded in all subjects, not only Islamic Education.

Teachers were observed guiding students gently, using calm tones during *dhikr*, and demonstrating the moral qualities they aimed to instill. Students tended to imitate teachers' behavior, showing how modeling plays a strong role in moral formation. Teachers' consistent reinforcement both verbal and behavioral helped strengthen the connection between spiritual practices and moral behavior.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that dhikr practices and students' comprehension of religious values significantly contribute to the formation of moral behavior among elementary students at MI Al-Khairiyah Parijatah Kulon. These results align with and

extend current scholarship on spiritual pedagogy, moral development, and Islamic education. The consistent implementation of dhikr routines conducted before lessons, after the Dhuhr prayer, and in weekly gatherings creates an emotionally stable environment that enhances students' readiness to engage in ethical behavior. This supports the argument presented by (Idris & Adawiyah, 2023) which asserts that spiritual practices embedded in school routines can promote emotional regulation and prosocial conduct among young learners. In the context of MI Al-Khairiyah, dhikr serves as both a ritual and a pedagogical tool that shapes students' affective states, making them calmer, more disciplined, and more receptive to moral instruction. This connection between spirituality and emotional regulation resonates with the findings of (Smadi, 2022) who suggests that religious recitations help students internalize states of mindfulness that influence ethical decision-making.

The students' comprehension of religious values such as honesty, respect, patience, gratitude, and responsibility emerged as a crucial factor in the development of moral reasoning and behavior. Interviews with students revealed that they could articulate basic Islamic moral principles, although their understanding varied in depth. This is consistent with (Yu et al., 2013) framework of character education, which emphasizes the integration of moral knowledge, moral feelings, and moral actions. The present study shows that students at MI Al-Khairiyah are gradually progressing from moral knowledge toward moral action, as evidenced by improved behavior such as increased cooperation, reduced conflicts, greater discipline, and enhanced respect toward teachers and peers. This supports the findings of (Ilham Taufiq et al., 2023), whose study in an Indonesian Islamic school published in Cogent Education revealed that students internalize moral values more effectively when teachers consistently provide contextual explanations linked to their lived experiences.

Teacher involvement played a pivotal role in shaping students' moral formation, particularly through strategies such as explaining the meanings of dhikr, embedding moral reminders in daily activities, and modeling ethical behavior. The crucial role of teacher modeling is confirmed by (Permatasari et al., 2023) study, which highlights that students are more likely to adopt moral behaviors when teachers demonstrate those behaviors authentically. In MI Al-Khairiyah, teachers' calm conduct, patience, and respectful interactions provided real-life examples for students to imitate. This supports Bandura's social learning theory, which posits that ethical behavior is often learned through observation of authority figures. The findings of this study further extend these theoretical claims by

showing that teacher modeling, when combined with spiritual rituals, creates a strong foundation for internalizing moral values.

The integration of dhikr and moral instruction also aligns with research on spiritual education that highlights the importance of combining ritual practices with explicit teaching to create meaningful moral learning experiences. A study by (Larasati, 2017), emphasizes that children internalize moral values more deeply when religious practices are paired with guided reflection. This is evident in MI Al-Khairiyah, where teachers accompany dhikr recitations with short explanations of their meanings and moral implications, allowing students to connect ritual practice with ethical behavior in daily life. The combination of routine, repetition, and contextual explanation appears to reinforce students' understanding, which mirrors the pedagogical approach recommended by (Ilyasin, 2020), who advocate for a holistic model of Islamic education that integrates spirituality, intellect, and morality.

This study also highlights notable variation in students' levels of comprehension and participation in dhikr. Some students participated mechanically, giving minimal attention to the meanings of the recitations. reported by (Winoto, 2022), who found that ritual practices sometimes become habitual rather than reflective when teachers do not consistently reinforce meaning-making. At MI Al-Khairiyah, teachers acknowledged this gap and suggested the need for more frequent and interactive explanation sessions. This indicates that dhikr alone is insufficient for moral formation unless accompanied by intentional instructional strategies. The finding reinforces the argument of (Suriadi & Supriyatno, 2020), whose study emphasized that spiritual routines must be supported by dialogic engagement to ensure deeper internalization.

The research also reveals a gap between students' ritual compliance and their analytical understanding of religious values. While students demonstrated improved moral behavior, their explanations often focused on concrete actions rather than abstract moral principles. This echoes the findings of (Noboru et al., 2021) in the Journal of Islamic Education, which suggest that younger learners in Islamic schools typically develop moral behaviors before developing abstract moral reasoning. Thus, practical behavior often precedes conceptual depth. This reinforces the importance of age-appropriate pedagogy, showing that teachers must continuously bridge the gap between doing what is right and understanding why it is right.

Another significant contribution of this study is the affirmation that rural Islamic schools possess unique cultural strengths such as strong community involvement and a

supportive religious environment that positively influence moral development. Studies by (Fahmy et al., 2024) support this finding by showing that rural contexts often enhance spiritual learning due to closer communal ties and shared values. The social cohesion observed at MI Al-Khairiyah, where teachers, parents, and community members uphold similar moral expectations, further reinforces students' character formation. At the same time, the school faces contemporary challenges, such as students' exposure to social media and reduced parental supervision at home, which sometimes contradict the values taught in school. This tension between school values and external influences mirrors the findings of (Ilyasin, 2020), who note that modern distractions hinder moral education in many Indonesian Islamic contexts.

This study extends existing scholarship by demonstrating how dhikr practices can function not only as spiritual rituals but also as pedagogical tools that enhance moral formation when combined with intentional teacher guidance and value-based instruction. It contributes to the growing discourse on the integration of spirituality and character education, showing that ritual practices have substantial potential to reinforce moral dispositions in younger learners. The findings also highlight the importance of teacher modeling, contextual explanation, and consistent reinforcement elements that are frequently emphasized in contemporary character education literature but less commonly examined in relation to dhikr practices in elementary Islamic schools. Therefore, this research enriches the field by providing empirical insights into how Islamic spiritual traditions can be harmonized with modern pedagogical approaches to foster holistic moral development.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, this study concludes that the formation of students' moral character at MI Al-Khairiyah Dusun Melik is significantly influenced by the systematic implementation of dhikr practices and the internalization of religious values within daily school routines. Dhikr functions not only as a ritual activity but also as an affective pedagogical tool that enhances students' emotional regulation, attentiveness, and readiness to practice moral behavior. Students' comprehension of religious values likewise develops through continuous reinforcement, leading to observable improvements in respect, responsibility, patience, and cooperation. These conclusions directly address the research questions regarding the implementation of dhikr, students' understanding of religious values, and the combined contribution of both elements to their moral development. The findings

carry theoretical implications, suggesting that spiritual practices can strengthen character formation when integrated with value-based instruction. Practically, the results highlight the need for schools to maintain consistent dhikr routines, provide explicit moral guidance, and model ethical behavior to support students' moral growth. Future research may explore the long-term impact of such practices across different educational contexts to deepen understanding of spiritually grounded character education..

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