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The Role of Islamic Religious Education Teachers in Developing Madrasah Core Values toward Students' Character Formation at Madrasah Aliyah Al-Islam Surakarta

Muchammad Syafii^{a.1,*}, Joko Subando^{b.2}.

^{*ab} Institut Islam Mamba'ul Ulum, Surakarta, Indonesia.

^{*1}syafii.muchammad@gmail.com, ²jokosubando@yahoo.co.id

*Correspondent Author: Muchammad Syafii : email; syafii.muchammad@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teachers in developing *madrasah* core values and their contribution to students' character formation at *Madrasah Aliyah Al-Islam Surakarta*. The research aims to analyze how teachers internalize institutional core values and to explore their impact on shaping students' religious, moral, and social character. A qualitative research approach with a case study design was employed to obtain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon within its natural context. The participants consisted of 30 students selected purposively, along with one Islamic Religious Education teacher as the key informant. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. Data analysis followed the stages of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, while triangulation techniques were applied to ensure data validity and credibility. The findings reveal that Islamic Religious Education teachers play strategic roles as educators, role models, mentors, and facilitators in strengthening madrasah core values. The internalization process was implemented through value-based learning, exemplary behavior, habituation programs, and religious activities. Empirical findings indicate that 83% of students demonstrated significant improvement in religious discipline, 78% showed increased responsibility and honesty, 80% exhibited better social attitudes and cooperation, and 75% reflected stronger moral awareness in daily behavior. These results suggest that the consistent integration of core values into pedagogical practices significantly contributes to students' character formation.

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Introduction

Character education has become a strategic agenda within Indonesia's national education system, particularly in the context of Islamic education, which positions values as the primary foundation of learning. *Madrasah*, as Islamic educational institutions, bear the responsibility of integrating religious, moral, and social values into everyday educational practices. Strengthening students' character is not solely concerned with cognitive achievement but also with the formation

of integrity, responsibility, and sustainable spirituality. In this context, Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teachers assume a central role as agents of value internalization.

Madrasah Aliyah, as a secondary level of education, faces complex challenges in fostering students' character amid the dynamics of globalization, digitalization, and the moral crisis affecting younger generations. Various reports indicate an increasing trend of moral degradation, such as low discipline, limited social responsibility, and weak self-control among adolescents (Suyadi, 2020, : 112). This condition necessitates the strengthening of institutional value systems, or madrasah core values, that are consistently implemented within school culture.

The concept of core values in educational institutions refers to a set of fundamental principles that serve as the identity, direction, and behavioral standards for all members of the school community. Core values should not remain merely formal documents; they must be internalized within pedagogical practices and social interactions (Hidayat & Kurniawan, 2021 : 87). In madrasah contexts, core values commonly encompass religiosity, integrity, discipline, responsibility, and social concern.

IRE teachers hold a strategic position in the process of value internalization because the subject matter they teach is oriented toward the cultivation of morality and spirituality. Their role includes educational functions, role modeling, mentoring, and strengthening the religious culture within the madrasah (Rahman, 2022 : 54). IRE teachers do not merely transmit normative knowledge but also serve as moral exemplars who influence students' character formation through daily interactions.

Several previous studies have examined character education in madrasah settings. Research conducted by Arifin (2021: 233) demonstrates that the integration of character education into the IRE curriculum positively affects students' religious attitudes. Another study by Mulyani and Siregar (2022 : 145) emphasizes the importance of value-based school culture in shaping students' disciplined behavior.

Research on value internalization has also been carried out by Prasetyo (2023 : 98), who found that teacher exemplarity constitutes a dominant factor in character formation. The study highlights the importance of consistency in teachers' behavior as living models of values. These findings indicate that the practical dimension of education exerts a stronger influence than purely lecture-based approaches.

International research on value-based education shows that the success of character education depends on the integration of values throughout the entire school system rather than being confined to a single subject (Lovat & Toomey, 2020 : 41). This perspective reinforces the importance of an institutional approach in building students' character through core values.

A study by Ismail and Abdullah (2021 : 120) reveals that religious education teachers in Islamic school contexts contribute significantly to the development of students' moral reasoning. The research underscores the need for synergy between institutional values and pedagogical practices.

Despite the growing body of literature on character education and the role of IRE teachers, studies that specifically connect the role of IRE teachers with the construction of madrasah core values as an institutional framework remain limited. Most existing research focuses on curriculum implementation or instructional methods without analyzing the construction of core values as a cultural system within the *madrasah*.

The research gap is also evident in the limited number of case-study-based investigations that explore the practice of core value internalization at specific *Madrasah Aliyah* institutions. Each madrasah possesses distinct cultural characteristics and value implementation strategies. Local context plays a crucial role in understanding the dynamics of character formation.

Madrasah Aliyah Al-Islam Surakarta, as an Islamic educational institution, upholds a structured vision and core values aimed at fostering religious and integrity-based character. This institutional identity makes the *madrasah* a relevant research locus for examining the practice of core value internalization through the role of IRE teachers.

The novelty of this research lies in its integrative analysis of the pedagogical role of IRE teachers and the construction of *madrasah* core values as an institutional cultural system. The study does not merely examine the implementation of IRE instruction but also maps how core values are articulated, internalized, and reproduced within educational practices.

The theoretical contribution of this study is the development of a conceptual model that explains the relationship between IRE teachers, madrasah core values, and students' character formation. This model enriches the literature on Islamic value-based character education in the context of secondary education.

The practical contribution of this research is the provision of strategic recommendations for *madrasah* institutions in designing value-based school culture reinforcement through the optimization of IRE teachers' roles. The findings may serve as a reference for teacher professional development policies aimed at strengthening the integration of values and instruction.

This study also contributes to the global discourse on value-based education within the context of Islamic education. It presents empirical evidence from *Indonesia* as the country with the largest *Muslim* population, thereby offering insights relevant to the development of Islamic education literature at the international level.

Based on this background, the present study aims to conduct an in-depth analysis of the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers in developing madrasah core values and their implications for students' character formation at *Madrasah Aliyah Al-Islam Surakarta*. The study is expected to enrich the body of knowledge in Islamic education and provide an empirical foundation for strengthening character education grounded in institutional values.

Method

This study employed a qualitative approach aimed at obtaining an in-depth understanding of the role of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teachers in developing *madrasah* core values and their implications for students' character formation. A qualitative approach was selected to explore the meanings, processes, and dynamics of value internalization within the natural context of the *madrasah* (Creswell & Poth, 2018 : 43; Sugiyono, 2021 : 9). The focus of the research was directed toward participants' interpretations of value-based educational practices.

The research design adopted was an intrinsic case study. This design enabled the researcher to examine the phenomenon comprehensively within a specific context, namely *Madrasah Aliyah Al-Islam Surakarta*. A case study provides an opportunity for in-depth exploration of pedagogical practices, institutional culture, and social interactions that contribute to students' character formation (Yin, 2018 : 15).

The objective of this study was to analyze the pedagogical and exemplary roles of IRE teachers in developing *madrasah* core values and to identify their implications for students' character formation. The study also sought to map the strategies of value internalization implemented in classroom instruction and school culture.

The evaluation model employed in this study was the CIPP (Context, Input, Process, Product) evaluation model. This model was selected because it enables a systematic evaluation of value implementation, encompassing institutional context, available resources, implementation processes, and the outcomes related to students' character development (Stufflebeam & Zhang, 2017 : 64). Context evaluation examined the vision and core values of the *madrasah*, input evaluation analyzed the competencies of IRE teachers, process evaluation investigated instructional practices, and product evaluation assessed changes in students' character.

The research was conducted at *Madrasah Aliyah Al-Islam Surakarta*, an Islamic secondary educational institution with a vision of strengthening character based on religious values. The site was selected purposively on the basis that the *madrasah* possesses a structured institutional value system and integrated character development programs.

The research participants consisted of one Islamic Religious Education teacher as the key informant and 30 students as supporting informants. Informants were selected using purposive sampling based on their direct involvement in the value internalization process. This approach enabled the researcher to obtain relevant and in-depth data (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2018: 28).

Data collection techniques included in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. Interviews were conducted to explore the perspectives of teachers and students regarding the implementation of core values. Observations were undertaken to document instructional practices and social interactions reflecting value internalization. Document analysis was used to examine the *madrasah's* vision, curriculum, and character development programs.

The research instruments consisted of semi-structured interview guidelines, observation sheets, and document analysis formats. These instruments were developed based on indicators of the roles of IRE teachers and indicators of students' character derived from the literature on Islamic character education (Lickona, 2019 : 52; Suyadi, 2020 :118).

Data validity was ensured through source triangulation, technique triangulation, and time triangulation. Source triangulation involved comparing data obtained from teachers and students. Technique triangulation combined interviews, observations, and document analysis. Data credibility was strengthened through member checking and peer debriefing to ensure consistency of interpretation (Sugiyono, 2021 : 273).

The research procedure was conducted in several stages, including preparation, data collection, data analysis, and report writing. The preparation stage involved proposal development and obtaining research permits. Data collection was carried out over two months through regular observations and scheduled interviews.

Data analysis was conducted interactively through the stages of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The analytical process followed the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2018: 12), which operates cyclically until credible and in-depth findings are achieved.

Result

This section presents the findings of the study concerning the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers in constructing and implementing the core values of the *madrasah* and their implications for students' character formation at *Madrasah Aliyah Al-Islam Surakarta*. The results are organized systematically according to the CIPP evaluation framework, encompassing context, input, process, and product components. Data were derived from in-depth observations, semi-structured interviews, and institutional documentation, and were subsequently analyzed using a four-point evaluative scale to ensure analytical rigor and consistency.

This study employed the CIPP evaluation model to analyze the role of Islamic Religious Education (IRE) teachers in developing *madrasah* core values and their implications for students' character formation at *Madrasah Aliyah Al-Islam Surakarta*. The findings are presented based on four evaluation components: context, input, process, and product. Scores were derived from observations, interviews, and documentation, which were converted into a 1–4 scale (1 = poor, 2 = fair, 3 = good, 4 = very good).

1. Context Evaluation

Table 1. Context Component Scores

No	Context Component	Score (1–4)	Category
1	Clarity of the <i>madrasah</i> 's vision and mission	4	Very Good
2	Formulation of <i>madrasah</i> core values	4	Very Good
3	Socialization of values to the school community	3	Good
4	Institutional policy support	3	Good
Average Score		3.5	Very Good

The context evaluation indicates that the *madrasah*'s vision, mission, and core values have been systematically formulated and clearly documented. Institutional documents demonstrate the integration of religiosity, integrity, discipline, and responsibility as the foundation of school culture. Clarity of institutional direction constitutes a crucial factor in the successful implementation of character education (Suyadi, 2020 : 118).

The socialization of values is conducted through assemblies, classroom instruction, and religious programs. Institutional policy support is reflected in structured worship habituation programs and value-based school regulations. A strong institutional context strengthens the consistency of value internalization (Hidayat & Kurniawan, 2021 : 90).

2. Input Evaluation

Table 2. Input Component Scores

No	Input Component	Score (1–4)	Category
1	Pedagogical competence of IRE teachers	4	Very Good
2	Exemplary conduct of IRE teachers	4	Very Good
3	Availability of value-based instructional tools	3	Good
4	Support of religious facilities	3	Good

Average Score	3.5	Very Good
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The pedagogical competence of the IRE teacher is categorized as very good. The teacher demonstrates the ability to integrate values into lesson plans and classroom practices. Exemplary conduct constitutes a primary strength in fostering students' character. The teacher's discipline and consistency in worship practices directly influence students' behavioral habituation (Prasetyo, 2023: 98).

Value-based instructional tools are available and systematically structured. Facilities such as the mosque, tahfiz room, and mentoring programs support the reinforcement of religious values. The availability of quality inputs represents a prerequisite for successful character education (Rahman, 2022 : 57).

3. Process Evaluation

Table 3. Process Component Scores

No	Process Component	Score (1–4)	Category
1	Integration of values in instruction	4	Very Good
2	Habituation and role-modeling methods	4	Very Good
3	Student involvement in religious activities	3	Good
4	Character monitoring and evaluation	3	Good
Average Score		3.5	Very Good

The process of value internalization occurs through the integration of *moral* content, reflective discussions, and congregational worship habituation. The teacher not only delivers normative material but also cultivates *moral* awareness through dialogical approaches. This practice aligns with character education theory emphasizing role modeling (Lickona, 2019 : 52).

Character monitoring is conducted through behavioral observations and homeroom teacher reports. Student involvement in religious activities reflects active participation in value-based culture. Consistent processes strengthen character formation grounded in practical experience (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2018 : 12).

4. Product Evaluation

Table 4. Product Component Scores

No	Product Component	Percentage	Category
1	Improvement in religious discipline	83%	High
2	Improvement in responsibility	78%	High
3	Improvement in social attitudes	80%	High
4	Improvement in integrity and honesty	75%	High
Average Percentage		79%	High

A total of 83% of students demonstrated improvement in religious discipline and adherence to school regulations. Responsibility and integrity values showed significant enhancement based on observations and interviews. These results indicate the effectiveness of integrating core values into

character formation.

Social attitudes improved by 80%, reflected in cooperation and peer concern. The product evaluation demonstrates that value internalization produces tangible impacts on students' daily behavior.

5. Recapitulation of CIPP Evaluation Results

Component	Average Score	Category
Context	3.5	Very Good
Input	3.5	Very Good
Process	3.5	Very Good
Product	79%	High

The recapitulation results indicate that the implementation of core values through the role of IRE teachers is categorized as very good in the context, input, and process aspects, and high in the product aspect.

The findings of this study demonstrate that the implementation of madrasah core values through the strategic role of Islamic Religious Education teachers has been systematically institutionalized and operationalized within the educational environment of *Madrasah Aliyah Al-Islam Surakarta*. The CIPP evaluation model confirms that the contextual foundation, institutional inputs, and pedagogical processes function in an integrated and mutually reinforcing manner. The alignment between vision, policy, teacher competence, and value-based instructional practices establishes a coherent framework for character education.

Empirical evidence derived from observations, interviews, and documentation indicates that the internalization of religious discipline, responsibility, social awareness, and integrity is not incidental but structurally cultivated through continuous habituation and exemplary modeling. The high scores across context, input, and process components, alongside strong product outcomes, reflect the effectiveness of value integration in both formal learning activities and extracurricular religious programs. This consistency strengthens the moral ecology of the madrasah and fosters sustainable character development among students.

The role of Islamic Religious Education teachers emerges as a central catalyst in translating institutional values into lived educational experiences. Their pedagogical competence, moral exemplarity, and commitment to value-based instruction significantly influence students' behavioral transformation. The findings affirm that character formation in Islamic educational settings is most effective when values are embedded across curriculum design, classroom interaction, and school culture.

In conclusion, this study provides empirical support for the effectiveness of a value-oriented educational framework grounded in institutional culture and reinforced through teacher leadership. The CIPP-based evaluation offers a comprehensive analytical lens for assessing character education programs in madrasah contexts. These results contribute to the broader discourse on Islamic character education and provide a replicable evaluative model for similar institutions seeking to strengthen core values and student character formation.

Discussion

This discussion section interprets the research findings in relation to the theoretical framework of character education and the institutionalization of core values within Islamic secondary education. The analysis critically examines how the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers functions not only at the instructional level but also at the cultural and structural levels of the madrasah. By situating the empirical results within contemporary scholarship on value-based education, this section seeks to explain the mechanisms through which institutional vision, pedagogical competence, and value integration contribute to measurable character outcomes.

Furthermore, the discussion highlights the interrelationship among the context, input, process, and product components identified through the CIPP evaluation model. The findings are analyzed to determine how coherence between policy direction, teacher exemplarity, and structured habituation practices strengthens students' moral development. Through this analytical lens, the study offers a deeper understanding of how Islamic educational institutions can operationalize core values systematically to produce sustainable character formation.

The role of IRE teachers is proven to be strategic in constructing a value-based culture within the madrasah. Clarity of vision and core values serves as the primary foundation for character reinforcement.

The alignment between institutional policy and classroom practice reflects systematic value integration. Teacher exemplarity emerges as a dominant factor in the internalization of character. Consistent religious culture strengthens the habituation of disciplined attitudes.

The integration of values into lesson planning demonstrates institutional commitment to mainstreaming character education. Active student participation indicates that value internalization occurs through dialogical engagement. Character monitoring reinforces value-based social control mechanisms. These findings support institutional value-based character education theory. The study reveals a close relationship between school culture and moral development.

The CIPP model proves effective in evaluating value implementation in madrasah settings. Strengthening the role of IRE teachers may serve as a national strategy for character development. This research contributes to the enrichment of Islamic education literature grounded in value-based school culture.

In closing, the discussion underscores that the effectiveness of core values implementation in the madrasah context is strongly dependent on the coherence between institutional vision, teacher professionalism, and sustained value-based practices. The findings affirm that Islamic Religious Education teachers play a transformative role in bridging normative religious principles with students' lived experiences. Their pedagogical competence and moral exemplarity function as catalytic elements that translate abstract institutional values into observable character development.

The integration of contextual support, adequate inputs, consistent processes, and measurable outcomes demonstrates that character education in the *madrasah* operates as a systemic endeavor rather than a fragmented initiative. The CIPP-based analysis confirms that sustainable character formation emerges from structured planning, disciplined implementation, and continuous evaluation. These insights reinforce the importance of strengthening teacher capacity and institutional commitment in order to maintain the continuity and impact of value-oriented education in Islamic secondary schools.

Conclusion

This conclusion synthesizes the principal findings of the study regarding the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers in constructing and reinforcing the core values of the madrasah and their implications for students' character formation. Drawing upon the CIPP evaluation framework, the study has systematically examined the alignment between institutional context, educational inputs, pedagogical processes, and measurable character outcomes. The integration of these components provides a comprehensive understanding of how value-based education operates within the *madrasah* setting.

The concluding section highlights the extent to which institutional vision, teacher competence, and structured habituation practices collectively contribute to sustainable moral development among students. By reflecting on the empirical evidence presented in the preceding sections, this part emphasizes the strategic significance of teacher leadership and institutional coherence in ensuring that core values are not only articulated at the policy level but also internalized in students' daily behavior and attitudes.

IRE teachers hold a central role in developing madrasah core values. A strong institutional context supports value consistency. Teacher competence and exemplarity represent primary determinants. Value internalization is implemented through instruction and habituation. Student participation enhances the effectiveness of value reinforcement. Character monitoring increases discipline.

Significant improvement in students' character is evident. The CIPP model provides a comprehensive evaluation framework. Value integration requires sustained reinforcement. Value-based madrasah education possesses substantial potential in shaping a morally grounded generation.

In conclusion, the findings of this study reaffirm that the role of Islamic Religious Education teachers is pivotal in institutionalizing and sustaining the core values of the madrasah. The comprehensive CIPP evaluation demonstrates that a well-articulated institutional context, supported by qualified human resources and value-oriented learning instruments, creates a coherent framework for character formation. The alignment between vision, policy, and pedagogical practice serves as a structural foundation for cultivating students' moral and religious integrity.

Furthermore, the study highlights that teacher exemplarity and consistent value internalization processes are decisive factors in shaping students' behavioral outcomes. Character education is not merely transmitted through formal instruction but is constructed through habituation, dialogical engagement, and continuous supervision. The measurable improvements in students' religious discipline, responsibility, social attitudes, and integrity indicate that institutional core values can effectively transform into lived moral practices when implemented systematically.

Ultimately, this research confirms that the CIPP model provides a comprehensive and analytical framework for evaluating value-based educational programs in Islamic secondary institutions. Sustaining and strengthening the integration of core values within teaching and school culture remain essential for long-term character development. Madrasahs that consistently align institutional policy, teacher professionalism, and participatory student engagement hold significant potential in shaping a generation characterized by strong moral commitment and responsible citizenship.

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