



Building Student Character through Worship in Elementary Schools

Susan San Htay¹, Ei Thet Hmoo Po¹, Piyada Kaewkanlaya²

¹East Yangon University, Myanmar

²Valaya Alongkorn Rajabhat University, Thailand

✉ susan@gmail.com *

Article Information:

Received May 18, 2025

Revised June 22, 2025

Accepted July 15, 2025

Keywords: *Character education, congregational prayer, Islamic education, religious discipline*

Abstract

By encouraging individuals to become better people, it fosters a sense of social awareness that contributes to positive character development. In this regard, Islam recommends congregational prayer. Although it is not obligatory, congregational prayer carries a reward twenty seven times greater than praying alone. This study aims to explore the character values developed through the habituation of congregational Zuhur prayer. A qualitative research method with a case study approach was used. Data were collected from thirteen informants through direct interviews guided by a structured interview protocol. The interview data were analyzed thematically using Miles and Huberman's Interactive Model of Analysis. The findings indicate that congregational Zuhur prayer functions as an extracurricular activity in elementary schools designed to familiarize students with group worship. This practice contributes to the development of various character traits, including religious awareness, discipline, responsibility, and honesty. These results may serve as a foundation for future research on similar topics in different educational contexts.

INTRODUCTION

Character education is an effort to support the development of children's physical and mental aspects, guiding their natural disposition toward a more humane and improved civilization (Sanjaya & Octavia, 2024; Wakhyudi & Setyorini, 2021). It is a continuous and ongoing process that contributes to sustainable quality improvement and aims to shape future generations rooted in the cultural values of the nation (Agbedahin, 2019; Hambali, 2021; Susanto, 2022). Character education carries a broader meaning than moral education, as it not only addresses issues of right and wrong but also focuses on cultivating habits of goodness in everyday life. This process encourages students to develop a strong awareness and understanding, enabling them to consistently demonstrate care and commitment in practicing virtues (Abidin, 2021; Ubaidah et al., 2023). Character formation provides an effective approach to help students internalize positive habits that benefit both themselves and their social environment (Rais, 2023; Rokhmah, 2021; Sahuri, 2022).

Character can be defined as a way of thinking and behaving that reflects an individual's identity in interacting and cooperating within the family, community, nation and state (Kosim, 2012; Rosmi, 2016; Santika, 2018).

How to cite:

Htay, S. S., Po, E. T. H., Kaewkanlaya, P. (2025). Building Student Character through Worship in Elementary Schools. *Muaddib: Journal of Islamic Teaching and Learning*, 1(2), 55-63.

E-ISSN:

3109-046X

Published by:

intischolar press <https://intischolar.id/>

It is closely associated with moral values serving as spontaneous behavior or actions that have been internalized to the point of becoming second nature (Budiyo, 2023). Therefore, character is not merely taught theoretically but must be nurtured through consistent practice and reinforcement within daily educational activities.

The implementation of a habituation program can foster essential character values. These values represent the expected outcomes of both the learning process and the school or madrasah culture (Mazid & Suharno, 2019; Suardi et al., 2018). These values include components such as knowledge, awareness or willingness, and actions that reflect the internalization of these values in relation to God, the self, the environment, and the nation ultimately guiding individuals toward becoming *insan kamil* (Adhim, 2012; Hasanah, 2017).

Prayer, as one form of religious observance, serves as a medium through which a person can develop a broader perspective. When individuals understand the deeper spiritual meaning behind prayer, their worldview expands beyond rational thought and enables them to perceive matters beyond mere logic. Prayer also serves as a preventive measure against despicable thoughts and actions (Kandiri & Mahmudi, 2018).

The *Dzuhur* prayer is performed after the sun has passed its zenith until an object's shadow is equal in length to the object itself, excluding the shadow at the zenith. The term "congregation" derives from *al-ijtima'*, meaning gathering, and *al-jama'ah*, referring to a group united in purpose (Hardiansyah et al., 2021; Warasto, 2018; Yanti, 2022). In Islamic law, congregational prayer represents the connection between the imam and the congregation in a shared act of worship (Sholeha et al., 2022). It involves a group of at least two individuals performing prayer together (Sahuri, 2022).

Congregational prayer functions not only as a means of spiritual development and personal formation for Muslims but also holds significant social value (Syaroh & Mizani, 2020). Through practicing congregational prayer, Muslims can cultivate good moral character and strengthen social awareness (Ridwan et al., 2023; Wahrudin & Mukhibat, 2017). While not obligatory, congregational prayer is strongly encouraged in Islam and is said to carry a reward twenty-seven times greater than individual prayer (Darussalam, 2016).

METHODS

This research uses a qualitative method with a case study approach. Data sources were taken from twenty informants through in-depth interviews selected using purposive sampling technique (Febriani et al., 2022). The selection of informants must meet four criteria, namely that they are still active in the field under study, have competence related to the problem under study, are willing to take the time to provide information to researchers, and honestly provide information in accordance with the facts that occur in the field (Fitriani et al., 2022; Murniyetti et al., 2016). After the interviews were completed with all informants, the interview data was transcribed and themes were taken according to the objectives and needs of the research data. The data collection techniques used were observation, interview, and documentation. All data were analyzed using the milles and huberman analysis technique (Engkizar et al., 2025; Satrial et al., 2025). The analysis consisted of three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. To ensure the credibility of the findings, researchers also conducted triangulation by comparing information from different sources and methods. The

entire research process was carried out systematically and ethically, paying attention to the confidentiality and consent of the participants (Ardiningrum et al., 2021; Rahmi et al., 2021). As shown in the following picture

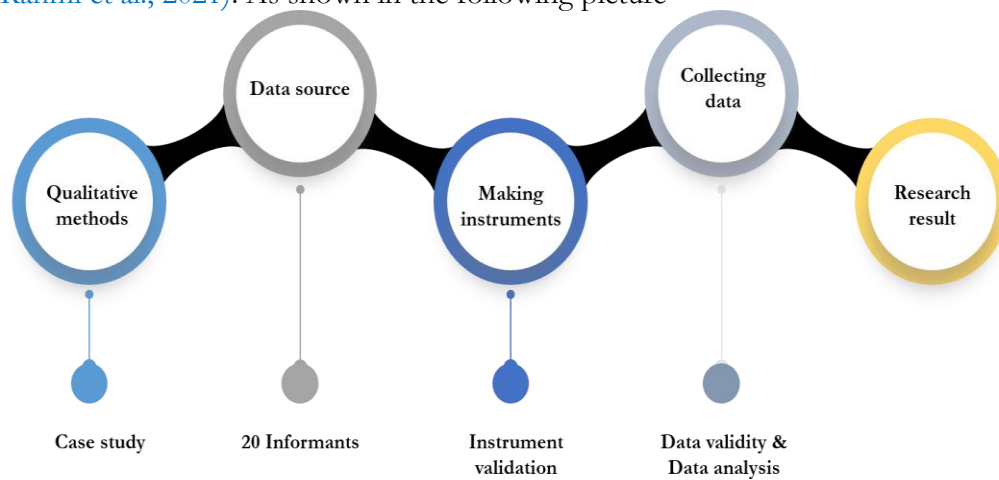


Fig 1. Research flow

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of interviews conducted with thirteen informants, the results of the analysis clearly found that there are three important themes related to the Implementation of Dzuhur Berjamaah in Shaping the Character of Students in West Sumatra Elementary Schools. The three themes are as follows:

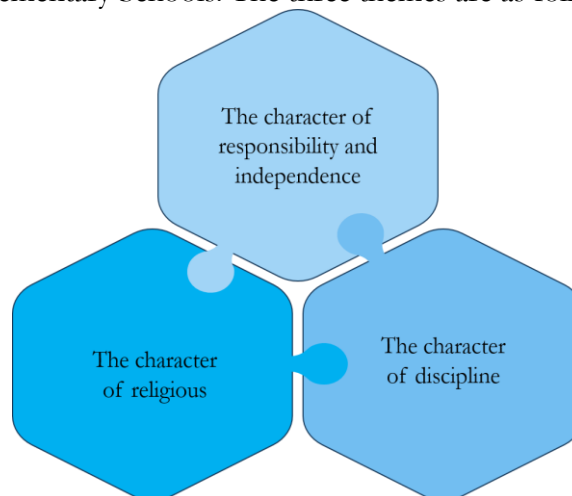


Fig 2. Building student character through worship in elementary schools

First, the character of responsibility and independence of students can be seen from their habit of performing Dzuhur prayers in congregation at school without having to be reminded. This shows that the habituation of worship has formed intrinsic awareness in students. One teacher said:

...They already know the schedule, when the bell rings they immediately run to the mosque, not hiding behind (informant).

In addition, students are also accustomed to doing various preparations and arrangements for worship independently, such as taking ablutions, arranging safes, and tidying up prayer equipment after the activity is over.

...Children are used to taking their own ablutions without being told. They also take turns arranging the prayer rows and tidying up the prayer equipment after it is finished. From

there we see a growing sense of responsibility and independence (informant).

Independence and courage are also evident when students are directly appointed to call to prayer during the Dzuhur prayer in congregation. Although not fully prepared, they still try to carry out the task with full responsibility. Based on the researcher's observation, the mentor teacher directly appoints students to be *muadzsin*, and after the adzan is finished, the teacher provides input as a form of learning (Arifin et al., 2020). One incident observed was when a student finished the adzan, the teacher gave a note that the rhythm of the adzan still resembled the *iqamah*. This reflects the process of character building through direct practice that supports students' courage and sense of responsibility.

The responsible and independent character of students can be seen from their habit of performing the Dzuhur prayer in congregation at school without having to be reminded. This shows that the habituation of worship has formed intrinsic awareness in students. One teacher said:

...They already know the schedule, when the bell rings they immediately run to the mosque, not hiding behind (informant).

In addition, students are also accustomed to doing various preparations and arrangements for worship independently, such as taking ablutions, arranging safes, and tidying up prayer equipment after the activity is over.

...Children are used to taking their own ablutions without being told. They also take turns arranging the prayer rows and tidying up the prayer equipment after it is finished. From there we see a growing sense of responsibility and independence (informant).

Independence and courage are also evident when students are directly appointed to call to prayer during the Dzuhur prayer in congregation. Although not fully prepared, they still try to carry out the task with full responsibility. Based on the researcher's observation, the mentor teacher directly appoints students to be *muadzsin*, and after the adzan is finished, the teacher provides input as a form of learning. One incident observed was when a student finished the adzan, the teacher gave a note that the rhythm of the adzan still resembled the *iqamah*. This reflects the process of character building through direct practice that supports students' courage and sense of responsibility.

Second, the discipline character of students can be seen from their orderliness in carrying out the Dzuhur prayer in congregation at school. Being orderly in worship is a form of discipline and responsibility towards one's obligations. These habits, if done consistently, will form a disciplined personal character. A teacher said that at the beginning of the program implementation, students were not fully orderly. However, over time they began to show positive changes:

...In the beginning, it must have been chaotic, because changing habits is difficult, so now thank God it has started to be orderly, even though they joke a lot but they have started to be orderly (informant).

Discipline is also reflected in the habit of students praying Dzuhur on time every day. They already understand the schedule and prepare before the call to prayer (Sultanik et al., 2022). In addition, the implementation of the picket schedule is also carried out according to the turn, which trains them to be responsible for the tasks that have been determined.

...The dzuhur prayer in congregation is held on time every day. Dcarri out Students know the time and are ready before the call to prayer. They also carry out the picket schedule according to their turn. This helps them learn discipline in their daily lives (informant).

Discipline is also seen in the attitude of students during ablution. Despite

limited water tap facilities, students still queue in an orderly manner. Teachers provide special supervision to ensure that order is maintained, including the arrangement of ablution places for male and female students (Murniyetti et al., 2016; Muslimin, 2023).

...All students perform ablution in the mosque, and because the water tap facilities are limited, so they queue. Especially if the water tap is off, students are advised to take a wuduk in the river for the boys, while the girls are separated in the position of taking a wuduk, and are supervised by the picket teacher (informant).

Third, the religious character of students can be seen from their habit of dhikr and prayer after performing Dzuhur prayer in congregation at school. Dhikr and prayer are practices that are highly recommended in Islamic teachings as a form of spiritual strengthening and self-reminder to Allah SWT. In this habituation activity, students are guided to offer prayers, especially praying for their parents after prayer. A teacher explained:

...After Dzuhur, students are told to dhikr and pray, especially praying for their parents (informant).

Other religious activities are also carried out routinely, such as reading prayers before and after learning and reciting the Quran together before the Dzuhur prayer. This habit slowly forms a religious attitude that is inherent in students' daily lives (Azis & Masrukin, 2019; Ridwan et al., 2020; Syaroh & Mizani, 2020). In fact, some of them have started to show concern for their friends who forget to pray, which is a sign that religious values are starting to grow naturally in them.

...The children are getting used to reading prayers before and after learning, as well as reciting the Quran together before the dzuhur prayer. Some of them even remind their friends if they forget to pray. This is evidence that religious values are starting to be embedded in their daily lives (informant).

This habit is not only a routine, but also an important part in shaping sustainable religious character. Through consistent habituation, religious values can be embedded more deeply and become part of students' behavior in daily life, both at school and at home.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research process that has been carried out, it can be understood that the habituation of worship in elementary schools makes a meaningful contribution to the character building of students. Although its implementation still requires consistent assistance and adaptation to school conditions, religious practices that are carried out regularly show potential in fostering positive values in students. This finding provides room for further strengthening through collaboration between teachers, parents and the school environment so that worship-based character building can take place in a sustainable and contextualized manner.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to everyone who contributed to the success of this research.

DECLARATIONS

Author contribution

Susan San Htay: data curation, writing-original draft preparation, **Ei Thet Hmoo**

Po: methodology, conceptualization, **Piyada Kaewkanlaya:** visualization, analysis, editing.

AI Statement

The data and the grammatical structure in this article have been validated and verified by English language experts and no AI-generated sentences are included in this article.

Funding statement

The author(s) declare that no financial support was received for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that this research was conducted without any conflict of interest in the research.

Ethical clearance

The research company has agreed to carry out the research and is willing if the results of this research are published.

Publisher's and Journal's Note

Islamic Studies Development and Research Center (IISDRC) as the publisher and Editor of Muaddib: Journal of Islamic Teaching and Learning state that there is no conflict of interest towards this article publication.

REFERENCES

- Abidin, Z. (2021). Manajemen Peningkatan Mutu Pendidikan Karakter Berbasis Agama, Budaya, Dan Sosiologi. *Al-Fikar: Jurnal For Islamic Studies*, 4(1), 181–202. <https://doi.org/10.31943/afkarjournal.v4i1.167>
- Adhim, F. (2012). Hubungan Pendidikan Karakter Terhadap Kecerdasan Emosional Pada Mahasiswa Fakultas Ekonomi Universitas Kanjuruhan Malang. *Jurnal Inspirasi Pendidikan Universitas Kanjuruhan Malang*, 1(1), 29–38. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.21067/jip.v1i1.474>
- Agbedahin, A. V. (2019). Sustainable development, Education for Sustainable Development, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Emergence, efficacy, eminence, and future. *Sustainable Development*, 27(4), 669–680. <https://doi.org/10.1002/sd.1931>
- Ardiningrum, A. R., Mesrawati, F., Pradiafta, F. S., Hakim, F., Fajar, G. S., & Angreini, R. (2021). Phenomenological Study of Factors Causing Pre-Marriage Pregnancy among Adolescents. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research of Higher Education*, 4(2), 65–71. <https://doi.org/10.24036/ijmurhica.v4i2.82>
- Arifin, Z., Lestari, R., Husna, L., & Rustiya, R. (2020). Shaping Student Character Through Daily Life Activities: Study of Female Students at Wisma Alamanda. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research of Higher Education*, 3(1), 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.24036/ijmurhica.v3i1.169>
- Azis, M. A., & Masrukin, A. (2019). Budaya Religius Dalam Pembentukan Karakter Peserta Didik Di SMP Islam Ulul Albab Nganjuk. *Jurnal Intelektual: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Studi Keislaman*, 9(3), 377–386. <https://doi.org/10.33367/ji.v9i3.1040>

- Budiyono, A. E. (2023). Peran Kepemimpinan Kepala Sekolah Dalam Pendidikan Karakter Peserta Didik Di Era Digital. *NUSRA: Jurnal Penelitian Dan Ilmu Pendidikan*, 4(3), 755–765. <https://doi.org/10.55681/nusra.v4i3.1448>
- Darussalam, A. (2016). Indahnya Kebersamaan Dengan Shalat Berjamaah. *Tafsire*, 4(1), 24–39. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.24252/jt.v4i1.7692>
- Engkizar, E., Jaafar, A., Masuwd, M. A., Rahman, I., Datres, D., Taufan, M., Akmal, F., Dasrizal, D., Oktavia, G., Yusrial, Y., & Febriani, A. (2025). Challenges and Steps in Living Quran and Hadith Research: An Introduction. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research of Higher Education (IJMURHICA)*, 8(3), 426–435. <https://doi.org/10.24036/ijmurhica.v8i3.396>
- Febriani, A., Sindi, N. F., Amanda, L. G., Rahman, R. A., & Putri, A. R. (2022). Seven Steps of the Implementation of Mind Mapping Method in Learning of Islamic Education. *Khalifa: Journal of Islamic Education*, 6(1), 24. <https://doi.org/10.24036/kjie.v6i1.194>
- Fitriani, F., Lestari, Y., Japeri, J., Namira, S., Engkizar, E., & Anwar, F. (2022). Strategi Guru Dalam Mendidik Akhlak Peserta Didik Di Sekolah Dasar. *Muallimuna : Jurnal Madrasah Ibtidaiyah*, 8(1), 13. <https://doi.org/10.31602/muallimuna.v8i1.6161>
- Hambali, I. (2021). Manajemen Pendidikan Karakter Dalam Meningkatkan Disiplin Peserta Didik. *JIIP - Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Pendidikan*, 4(1), 87–93. <https://doi.org/10.54371/jiip.v4i1.209>
- Hardiansyah, F., Budiyono, F., & Wahdian, A. (2021). Penerapan Nilai-nilai Ketuhanan Melalui Pembiasaan di Sekolah Dasar. *Jurnal Basicedu*, 5(6), 6318–6329. <https://doi.org/10.31004/basicedu.v5i6.1762>
- Hasanah, U. (2017). Model-model pendidikan karakter di sekolah. *Al-Tadzkiyyah: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 7(1), 18–34. <https://doi.org/10.24042/atjpi.v7i1.1491>
- Kandiri, K., & Mahmudi, M. (2018). Penerapan Shalat Dhuha dalam Peningkatan Moral Siswa di Sekolah. *Edupedia*, 3(1), 13–22. <https://doi.org/10.35316/edupedia.v3i1.316>
- Kosim, M. (2012). Urgensi Pendidikan Karakter. *Karsa: Journal of Social and Islamic Culture*, 92(<https://doi.org/10.19105/karsa.v19i1.78>), 84–92. <https://doi.org/10.19105/karsa.v19i1.78>
- Mazid, S., & Suharno, S. (2019). Implementasi nilai-nilai multikultural dalam pembelajaran PKn. *Harmoni Sosial: Jurnal Pendidikan IPS*, 6(1), 72–85. <https://doi.org/10.21831/hsjpi.v6i1.10248>
- Murniyetti, M., Engkizar, E., & Anwar, F. (2016). Pola Pelaksanaan Pendidikan Karakter Terhadap Siswa Sekolah Dasar. *Jurnal Pendidikan Karakter*, 7(2), 156–166. <https://doi.org/10.21831/jpk.v6i2.12045>
- Muslimin, I. (2023). Pengembangan Kurikulum Pendidikan Karakter di Madrasah Berbasis Kurikulum Merdeka. *Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam Darussalam*, 5(1), 108–130. <https://doi.org/10.30739/jmpid.v5i1.2093>
- Rahmi, R., Ramadhani, R., Nurhasnah, N., Namira, S., & Yaumas, N. E. (2021). Challenges of Parents Educating Children's Morals in Muslim Families. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research of Higher Education*, 4(3), 104–110. <https://doi.org/10.24036/ijmurhica.v4i3.90>
- Rais, M. (2023). Implementasi Pendidikan Agama Islam dalam Membina Karakter Disiplin Siswa di Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan. *Al-Miskawaih: Journal of Science Education*, 2(2), 255–272. <https://doi.org/10.56436/mijose.v2i2.276>
- Ridwan, A., Asmita, D., & Wulandari, N. P. (2023). Fungsi dan Peran Guru

- Pendidikan Agama Islam untuk Peningkatkan Kedisiplinan Pelaksanakan Sholat Berjamaah Siswa. *Journal on Education*, 5(4), 12026–12042. <https://doi.org/10.31004/joe.v5i4.2164>
- Ridwan, R. M., Triwoelandari, R., & Nawawi, K. (2020). Hubungan Pelaksanaan Shalat Zuhur Berjamaah Dengan Kedisiplinan Belajar Siswa Kelas VIII SMP Negeri 4 Kota Bogor. *Jurnal Inspiratif Pendidikan*, 9(1), 298–310. <https://doi.org/10.24252/ip.v9i1.16094>
- Rokhmah, D. (2021). Religiusitas Guru PAI: Upaya Peningkatan Disiplin Beribadah Siswa di SMP Islam Al Azhar 3 Bintaro. *Jurnal Pendidikan Madrasah*, 6(1), 105–116. <https://doi.org/10.14421/jpm.2021.61-14>
- Rosmi, Y. F. (2016). Pendidikan Jasmani Dan Pengembangan Karakter Siswa Sekolah Dasar. *WAHANA*, 66(1), 55–61. <https://doi.org/10.36456/wahana.v66i1.482>
- Sahuri, M. S. (2022). A Strategi Guru PAI Membentuk Karakter Religius Peserta Didik di SMP Al Baitul Amien Jember. *IJIT: Indonesian Journal of Islamic Teaching*, 5(2), 205–218. <https://doi.org/10.35719/ijit.v5i2.1555>
- Sanjaya, M. R., & Octavia, Y. (2024). Analisis Sosial Dalam Novel Catatan Hati Seorang Mahasiswa Karya Alief Aurum (Kajian Sosiologi Sastra Dan Pendidikan Karakter). *JURNAL DIDACTIQUE Bahasa Indonesia*, 5(1), 9–21. <https://doi.org/10.52333/didactique.v5i1.409>
- Santika, T. (2018). Peran keluarga, guru, dan masyarakat dalam pembentukan karakter anak usia dini. *JUDIKA (Jurnal Pendidikan UNSIKA)*, 6(2), 77–86. <https://doi.org/10.35706/judika.v6i2.1797>
- Satrial, A., Febrianto, F., Zulmasri, Z., Nurhayati, N., & Engkizar, E. (2025). Designing the character profile of Pancasila through Islamic personal development activities in the late childhood phase. *Primary: Jurnal Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Dasar*, 13(3), 136–145. <https://doi.org/10.33578/jpfkip-v13i3.p136-145>
- Sholeha, J., Nurjanah, T., Abidin, A., Hidayah, F. N., & Isnaini, R. (2022). Efek ponsel terhadap perilaku remaja dalam melaksanakan sholat lima waktu di desa Jojog kecamatan Pekalongan kabupaten Lampung Timur. *Jurnal Kesehatan*, 12(3), 188–190. <https://doi.org/10.47902/ijic.v1i1.197>
- Suardi, S., Megawati, M., & Kanji, H. (2018). Pendidikan Karakter di Sekolah (Studi Penyimpangan Siswa di Mts Muhammadiyah Tallo). *JED (Jurnal Etika Demokrasi)*, 3(1), 75–84. <https://doi.org/10.26618/jed.v3i1.1979>
- Sultanik, D., Japeri, J., Taufan, M., & Efendi, E. (2022). Implementing Character Values to Learners in Didikan Subuh Program. *International Journal of Islamic Studies Higher Education*, 1(1), 68–79. <https://doi.org/10.24036/insight.v1i1.110>
- Susanto, F. . (2022). Manajemen Penguatan Pendidikan Karakter Dalam Mewujudkan Mutu Lulusan Siswa Di Sekolah Satuan Pendidikan Kerjasama. *Al-Afkar, Journal For Islamic Studies*, 322(<https://doi.org/10.31943/afkarjournal.v5i4.379>), 315–322. <https://doi.org/10.31943/afkarjournal.v5i4.379>
- Syaroh, L. D. M., & Mizani, Z. M. (2020). Membentuk Karakter Religius dengan Pembiasaan Perilaku Religi di Sekolah: Studi di SMA Negeri 3 Ponorogo. *Indonesian Journal of Islamic Education Studies (IJIES)*, 3(1), 63–82. <https://doi.org/10.33367/ijies.v3i1.1224>
- Ubaidah, N. Al, Zamhari, A., Janah, M., Yuniar, Y., & Sari, P. P. (2023). Lingkungan

- Pendidikan Dalam Pendidikan Karakter. *Jurnal Multidisiplin Indonesia*, 2(6), 1103–1108. <https://doi.org/10.58344/jmi.v2i6.261>
- Wahrudin, B., & Mukhibat, M. (2017). Pola Pembinaan Kompetensi Kepribadian dan Kompetensi Sosial Guru di SMA Muhammadiyah 1 Ponorogo. *Nadwa: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 11(2), 137–156. <https://doi.org/10.21580/nw.2017.11.2.1832>
- Wakhyudi, Y., & Setyorini, R. (2021). Cerita Sebagai Media Penyampaian Pendidikan Karakter Islami: Array. *Dialektika Jurnal Pendidikan*, 5(2), 68–77 10 58436 5 2 901. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.58436/dfkip.v5i2.901>
- Warasto, H. N. (2018). Pembentukan Akhlak Siswa. *Jurnal Mandiri*, 2(1), 65–86. <https://doi.org/10.33753/mandiri.v2i1.32>
- Yanti, I. (2022). Pembiasaan sebagai Bentuk Penerapan Karakter Religius di Sekolah Menengah Pertama Negeri 4 Logas Tanah Darat. *Lucerna: Jurnal Riset Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran*, 2(2), 41–47. <https://doi.org/10.56393/lucerna.v2i2.993>

Copyright holder:

© Htay, S. S., Po, E. T. H., Kaewkanlaya, P. (2025)

First publication right:

Muaddib: Journal of Islamic Teaching and Learning

This article is licensed under:

CC-BY-SA