

# Integrating Islamic Moral Values into Holistic Education: A Systematic Character Development Model in Indonesian Junior High Schools

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**Abstract:** This study aims to examine how Islamic moral values are systematically integrated into holistic education through a structured character development model in Indonesian junior high schools. The research focuses on SMP Muhammadiyah 1 and SMP Integral Hidayatullah Probolinggo, two schools that formally embed value-based programs across curricular and extracurricular activities. Employing a qualitative multi-site case study design, data were collected through in-depth interviews with teachers, students, parents, and community representatives, sustained classroom and ritual observations, and document analysis. The data were analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis to identify patterns of moral internalization and contextual influences. The findings reveal four interconnected mechanisms of internalization: (1) classroom-based value reinforcement embedded across subjects; (2) ritualized religious habituation through shalat dhuha, Qur'an recitation, and halaqah mentoring; (3) everyday moral habits shaped by peer influence; and (4) cross-context reinforcement among school, family, and community. The study also identifies three forms of student resistance: silent compliance, moral fatigue, and peer counter-culture. The novelty of this research lies in operationalizing a layered and ecological character development model that integrates curricular, ritual, social, and contextual dimensions within a unified framework. The study contributes theoretically by bridging integrative-curricular, habitualization, experiential, and ecological approaches, and practically by offering a replicable model for sustainable Islamic moral education at the secondary school level.

**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis bagaimana nilai-nilai moral Islam diintegrasikan secara sistematis dalam pendidikan holistik melalui model pengembangan karakter yang terstruktur di sekolah menengah pertama. Studi ini dilakukan di SMP Muhammadiyah 1 dan SMP Integral Hidayatullah Probolinggo yang secara formal mengintegrasikan program berbasis nilai dalam kegiatan kurikuler dan ekstrakurikuler. Penelitian menggunakan desain studi kasus multi-situs dengan pendekatan kualitatif. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dengan guru, siswa, orang tua, dan perwakilan masyarakat, observasi kelas dan kegiatan religius secara berkelanjutan, serta analisis dokumen. Analisis data dilakukan dengan reflexive thematic analysis untuk mengidentifikasi pola internalisasi nilai dan pengaruh konteks sosialnya. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan empat mekanisme utama internalisasi nilai: (1) penguatan nilai berbasis kelas yang terintegrasi dalam berbagai mata pelajaran; (2) pembiasaan religius melalui shalat dhuha,



*tilawah Al-Qur'an, dan mentoring halaqah; (3) pembentukan kebiasaan moral sehari-hari melalui pengaruh teman sebaya; serta (4) penguatan lintas konteks antara sekolah, keluarga, dan masyarakat. Penelitian ini juga menemukan tiga bentuk resistensi siswa, yaitu kepatuhan semu, kelelahan moral, dan budaya tandingan teman sebaya. Kebaruan penelitian ini terletak pada perumusan model pengembangan karakter yang berlapis dan ekologis dengan mengintegrasikan dimensi kurikuler, ritual, sosial, dan kontekstual dalam satu kerangka sistematis. Secara teoretis, studi ini menjembatani pendekatan integratif-kurikuler, pembiasaan, eksperiensial, dan ekologis. Secara praktis, penelitian ini menawarkan model replikatif bagi penguatan pendidikan moral Islam yang berkelanjutan di tingkat sekolah menengah.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Holistic education has been promoted worldwide as an antidote to narrowly instrumental schooling: it aims not only to advance cognitive achievement but to cultivate the affective, social, and moral capacities required for democratic citizenship, social cohesion, and personal flourishing. Contemporary policy debates, from UNESCO frameworks to national curriculum reforms, stress that schooling must prepare students to act ethically and responsibly within plural societies; yet the practical translation of that ambition into everyday pedagogy remains uneven. Empirical reviews show a proliferation of holistic and value-based programmes, but also document a persistent gap between rhetorical commitments and classroom practice, especially where curricula are crowded and accountability regimes privilege measurable cognitive outcomes over moral formation (Miseliunaite et al., 2022).

In Indonesia the imperative to reconcile academic standards and character formation is particularly urgent. National curriculum initiatives such as the Merdeka Curriculum foreground learner autonomy and contextualised competencies, but the extent to which moral education, especially when grounded in religious traditions, can be systematically embedded across subjects is insufficiently documented (Nurfadillah & Mustika, 2024). At the same time, local educational ecosystems such as Probolinggo reveal complex social realities: plural communities, varying levels of parental engagement, and heterogeneous school capacities that together shape how values are taught and lived. These social facts indicate that any credible account of holistic education must attend to institutional pressures, stakeholder relations, and the sociocultural channels through which moral norms are transmitted (Rahmawati et al., 2024; Heriansyah, 2014).

A rapidly growing empirical literature addresses character education, experiential learning, and the curricular integration of values. Several studies document effective classroom strategies (discussion, role play, reflective journals) and institutional mechanisms (school culture change, extra-curricular programs)

that support character outcomes (Warapsari et al., 2023; Rosna, 2023; Rohmah, 2019). Meta-analyses and systematic reviews of holistic education indicate promising associations between holistic programmes and student wellbeing and prosocial attitudes, yet they also caution that evidence is unevenly distributed and often concentrated in limited contexts (Miseliunaite et al., 2022).

Separate streams of scholarship emphasize the critical role of family and community partnerships in sustaining school-based character initiatives. Large-scale and longitudinal studies have linked robust parent-teacher relationships and active family participation to better behavioral adjustment and higher subjective wellbeing among students (Liu et al., 2024; Sugiarti, 2022). Likewise, theorists of school-family-community partnership argue that programmes which intentionally coordinate messages and practices across home, school, and community produce more coherent socialization environments and therefore stronger internalization of values (Griffin et al., 2021).

Notwithstanding these contributions, three interlocking empirical gaps persist. First, much of the literature treats curricular innovations and family/community engagement as separable problems; comparatively few empirical studies examine how interactions among teachers, parents, and community stakeholders jointly condition value internalization. Second, published work on integrating religiously framed moral values (for example, Islam-based ethics) into whole-school programmes tends to emphasize curricular design or single-site case studies but offers limited cross-contextual evidence about the mechanisms that produce durable behavioural change. Third, evaluations often rely on short-term attitudinal measures rather than on triangulated evidence of habitual conduct and social practice across school and home settings (Latjompoh, 2025; Warapsari et al., 2023).

Prior research in Indonesian settings and in Islamic schooling contributes valuable insights but leaves these gaps open. Studies that document integrative curricular approaches, role modelling, habitualization, and experiential learning (e.g., Hafidz et al., 2022; Suhrawardi, 2020; Kolb/Schön theory applications) provide a robust pedagogical toolkit; yet they rarely test the interdependence of those practices with the dynamics of family and community engagement at the junior-high level (Nurfadillah & Mustika, 2024; Nurkholis & Santosa, 2024). Similarly, recent local models of school-parent synergy outline promising coordination frameworks but stop short of empirically linking specific patterns of stakeholder collaboration to measurable internalization of Islamic moral conduct across contexts (Model of Synergy Parents and Teachers, 2024).

In response to these lacunae, this study concentrates on junior high schools in Probolinggo that already incorporate Islamic moral content into a broader holistic pedagogy, specifically SMP Muhammadiyah 1 and SMP Integral Hidayatullah. Building on an extensive qualitative programme of observation, interviews, and document analysis, the research foregrounds an outcome-oriented question: under what conditions does curricular integration translate into observable moral practice among adolescents? Recent international evidence suggests that community-anchored and family-supported programmes produce stronger and more sustained effects than school-only interventions (Griffin et al., 2021; Liu et al., 2024), yet the

causal pathways and boundary conditions remain under-specified for Islamic value integration in Indonesian secondary contexts.

The originality of this paper does not rest on proposing a wholly new curriculum architecture; rather, it lies in providing empirically grounded claims about outcomes. Framed as an outcome-oriented contribution, the study is expected to demonstrate that the success of Islamic value internalization in holistic education is not reducible to curricular design alone but is critically conditioned by the synergistic engagement of three stakeholder groups: teachers, parents, and community actors. This expected contribution intersects with, and extends, findings from cross-national reviews which emphasize multi-system coordination as a decisive factor in character education effectiveness (Miseliunaite et al., 2022).

The principal objectives of the study are: (1) to describe how Islamic moral values are formally and informally embedded across curricular and extracurricular activities at the two schools; (2) to analyze the practices and interactions among teachers, parents, and community actors that support or inhibit student internalization of those values; and (3) to identify contextual conditions under which curricular integration most plausibly leads to durable moral habits and prosocial behaviours.

The central argument of the paper is that integrative curricular content and pedagogical methods are necessary but insufficient for deep value internalization: sustained moral formation among adolescents requires coherent socialization messages and practices across school, home, and community settings. Where teachers model and reinforce values, where parents consistently mirror and monitor such norms at home, and where community institutions provide supporting rituals and opportunities for enactment, the likelihood of students translating ethical instruction into daily conduct increases substantially. This argument aligns with social ecological models of development while specifying empirical markers for programmatic success in Islamic education contexts.

Finally, the significance of this study is twofold. Practically, its findings are intended to inform school leaders, curriculum designers, and community partners about scalable practices for integrating Islamic moral education into holistic schooling without sacrificing academic goals. Theoretically, by shifting attention from curriculum design to stakeholder-level outcome mechanisms, the study contributes to a maturing research agenda that seeks to understand how moral education translates into lived character, an outcome that matters for social cohesion, civic responsibility, and the ethical formation of future citizens. Given the policy momentum behind holistic and values-based education in Indonesia and beyond, such empirically grounded insights are timely and consequential.

## **METHOD**

This study adopts a qualitative multi-site case study design to examine how Islamic moral values are integrated within a holistic education framework and how their internalization depends on the interaction between teachers, parents, and community actors. A qualitative case design is appropriate because the research aims to capture the mechanisms and contextual conditions of value internalization rather than to measure effect size (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Yin, 2018). Data were collected at two junior high schools in Probolinggo (SMP Muhammadiyah 1 and SMP

Integral Hidayatullah) which have formally declared value-based programmes embedded in all learning areas.

Participants include (a) teachers in charge of value-integrated subjects, (b) students who directly experience instruction and school culture, (c) parents who reinforce (or constrain) moral uptake at home, and (d) representatives of community actors involved in religious and social support programmes (e.g., mosque committees, mentoring groups). Purposive sampling was used to select “information-rich” participants with direct and sustained involvement in value integration (Patton, 2015). In total, 20 participants were planned: 6 teachers, 8 students, 4 parents, and 2 community representatives.

Data were generated through (1) semi-structured interviews, (2) sustained naturalistic classroom and extracurricular observations, and (3) document analysis. Interview protocols comprised 10–15 open-ended prompts per group, including probes about enactment, negotiation, tensions, and reinforcement of Islamic values in concrete episodes rather than self-report ideals. Observations targeted: instructional episodes where moral values are enacted within math/science lessons; teacher modelling behaviours; collective rituals (prayer, dhikr, muroja’ah); and interactions in which teachers/parents/community are co-present. Field notes followed an event-sampling sheet to capture actor, action, value-cue, and uptake. Documents analysed included lesson plans, assessment sheets, school regulations, and co-curricular scripts to trace where value intentions are structurally embedded. Triangulation across sources was used to increase credibility (Denzin, 2012).

Data were analysed using reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021) in six iterative steps: familiarisation, inductive coding, search for patterned relations, candidate theme construction, review and refinement, and analytical writing. Because the study is outcome-oriented, coding explicitly attended to links between curricular events and behavioural uptake (internalisation cues) and to the cross-site interplay of teachers–parents–community. To strengthen analytic validity, theme generation incorporated both within-case and cross-case comparison (Miles, Huberman & Saldaña, 2020), followed by expert peer-debriefing to test the robustness of interpretive claims.

Credibility was supported by data triangulation, peer debriefing, and maintenance of an audit trail. Member checking with selected participants was conducted for factual verification of descriptive accounts, without soliciting normative approval of interpretations (to avoid consensus bias). Participation was voluntary with informed consent; names of schools and participants were de-identified at reporting stage. Ethical clearance was obtained before field entry in accordance with qualitative ethics for research involving minors (Tracy, 2020).

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **RESULT**

#### **Mechanisms of Internalization**

This section explains how Islamic moral values were practically internalized in the two junior high schools studied. The process did not rely only on teaching about moral concepts, but on daily repetition, social reinforcement, and real participation in meaningful activities. Internalization happened not only in formal religion

lessons, but was also built into everyday routines, making value learning a continuous and lived experience rather than something theoretical or abstract.

### ***Classroom-Based Value Reinforcement***

Classroom learning became the main platform where teachers embedded moral messages. In many observed classes, the teacher began lessons with a short *kultum* (mini-sermon) or student reflection related to a moral value. For example, before a mathematics lesson, a student shared a short talk about fairness, and the teacher later referred to that value when organizing group work.

Teachers explained that moral teaching was intentionally made part of academic lessons: *"We don't teach values as a separate subject; we include them in what students are already learning so the message becomes part of their thinking."* (T03)

Repetition was a key strategy. Students said they often heard the same values (honesty, patience, discipline, and respect) every day, but this repetition helped them make those values a normal part of life. One student said, *"It's boring at first, but then it becomes normal."* (S07) Teachers described this as "boring by design," meaning that repetition was used deliberately to strengthen habits.

Teachers also used nonverbal cues to remind students of values. For example, when the class became noisy, one teacher simply raised his hand in a prayer gesture. Without words, students immediately became quiet. A parent shared that her child used the same gesture at home to calm siblings (P04). This shows that moral habits learned in school could transfer naturally into home life.

However, the process depended on consistency. Some teachers admitted that time pressure sometimes caused moral routines to be skipped. Despite this, most classrooms still showed steady repetition of moral cues. This indicates that character development was best supported through small but regular moral actions integrated into everyday learning, not through long lectures or one-time events.

### ***Ritualized Religious Habituation***

Beyond classroom instruction, the internalization of Islamic moral values was strengthened through daily and weekly religious routines designed to cultivate discipline, responsibility, and spiritual sensitivity. Among these, the *shalat dhuha* and Qur'an reading programs emerged as the most consistent and influential practices in shaping students' moral character.

The daily *shalat dhuha* served not only as a religious obligation but as a structured habit-building exercise that trained students in punctuality, humility, and leadership. Every morning, students gathered in the prayer hall to perform *dhuha* together, with assigned rotations for roles such as *imam* (leader), *muadzin* (caller), and *row organizer*. This system encouraged students to take turns leading, ensuring that each one experienced both obedience and leadership. As one student reflected, *"At first I was nervous being imam, but after doing it many times, it feels normal."* (S02) Teachers intentionally used this repetition to develop moral courage, self-control, and public responsibility, values that extend beyond the ritual itself.

Parallel to the prayer routine, schools also implemented a daily Qur'an reading and reflection program before formal lessons began. Students read a designated

portion (*tilawah*) together or individually, followed by a brief interpretation or moral takeaway. Teachers reported that this practice helped build calmness, focus, and readiness to learn, while also reinforcing the ethical dimensions of Qur'anic teachings, such as honesty, gratitude, and mutual respect. One teacher (T04) explained, *"When students start the day by reading the Qur'an, it softens their hearts and makes them more mindful during class."* Parents similarly observed that children who regularly joined the morning reading became *"more patient and polite at home."* (P06)



**Figure 1.** The habituation of Dhuha prayer



**Figure 2.** The habituation of Qur'an recitation

These combined rituals of prayer and Qur'an recitation created a rhythm of spiritual habituation that was both repetitive and reflective. Students did not only memorize verses or perform rituals mechanically; through frequent participation, they learned discipline, time management, and emotional regulation. Teachers emphasized that repetition was essential, but meaning was equally important. Thus, short post-prayer or post-recitation reflections were often used to connect the

spiritual act with moral lessons relevant to daily life, for instance, linking the Qur'anic concept of *amanah* (trustworthiness) to classroom responsibility.

The weekly halaqah mentoring complemented these routines by providing a more dialogic and relational space. In small groups, mentors invited students to share moral challenges they faced during the week and collaboratively explored solutions grounded in Islamic principles. A mentor explained, "*Halaqah is not a lecture; it's where the students think out loud, and we guide their reasoning.*" (C03) Parents noticed a visible change in their children's emotional maturity: "*After halaqah, my daughter became calmer when solving problems at home, she reminds us to speak kindly.*" (P07)

In sum, religious habituation through shalat dhuha, Qur'an recitation, and halaqah mentoring functioned as a systematic character formation process. Through repetition, participation, and reflection, students learned to connect spiritual discipline with moral responsibility. These structured routines demonstrated that faith-based practices, when embedded consistently in school life, can become powerful vehicles for holistic moral education, combining devotion, empathy, and ethical behavior in everyday experience.

### ***Everyday Moral Habits and Peer Influence***

Moral values were also visible in daily school behavior. Students routinely greeted teachers and guests with *salaam* and a respectful handshake without needing reminders. Teachers emphasized that what mattered was initiative, not mere obedience: "*The important thing is that they greet on their own, not because we tell them to.*" (T01)

Over time, greeting and courtesy became part of the students' self-identity. One student said, "*It feels strange if I don't greet my teacher now.*" (S11) Peer influence also helped sustain good habits, older students often reminded younger ones to greet politely.

However, moral behavior among peers was not always perfect. In one case, some boys ignored a teacher, and their friends whispered reminders before the teacher reacted. Parents noted that peer correction was powerful: "*Friends' reminders work better than parents' scolding.*" (P02) This shows that moral norms had started to be internalized within the peer group, creating positive social pressure that supported character development.

### ***Reinforcement Across School, Home, and Community***

Many moral habits formed at school were observed to continue at home and in the wider community. Parents reported that students encouraged family members to pray or greet politely, showing that values were not only performed under supervision. For example, one parent said, "*My son now reminds his siblings to pray dhuha before school.*" (P01)

Teachers described this as a cycle of reinforcement, the school introduces a habit, the home maintains it, and the community validates it. Community members also noticed positive behavior in public settings, such as students queuing politely at the mosque (C02).

However, when families did not support the same values, students often lost the habits during holidays. One teacher explained, *“After long breaks, we have to start over if the home doesn’t continue the same practice.”* (T09) Therefore, lasting character development depends on cooperation among school, family, and community, not on school programs alone.

### ***Forms of Student Resistance***

Despite these positive outcomes, not all students responded the same way. Three main forms of resistance appeared: silent compliance, moral fatigue, and peer counter-culture. These forms show that students are not passive recipients of values, they interpret and sometimes resist them in subtle ways.

#### ***1. Silent Compliance***

Some students behaved properly when teachers were watching but became indifferent afterward. This “front-stage obedience” was common during collective prayers or assemblies. Students followed the motions correctly but lost focus once supervision ended. As one teacher said, *“They are obedient on stage, indifferent off stage.”* (T07)

This pattern reflects surface-level conformity rather than genuine moral awareness. Students said they complied mainly to avoid trouble. Parents confirmed that the same behavior appeared at home. This finding highlights the need for reflective dialogue and personal meaning-making, so students understand *why* values matter, not just *what* they are.

#### ***2. Moral Fatigue***

Constant repetition of the same moral slogans caused some students to lose interest. *“Every teacher says the same thing,”* one student said, *“so it becomes background noise.”* (S05) Teachers also noticed that students became emotionally detached during moral talks.

This “moral fatigue” did not lead to open rebellion, but it reduced motivation and attention. Teachers who used new approaches, such as linking values to real-life stories or current events, were more successful in keeping students engaged. The lesson is that moral repetition must be balanced with variety and relevance to sustain student attention and emotional connection.

#### ***3. Peer Counter-Culture***

In some cases, groups of students created a “counter-culture” that quietly resisted moral expectations. For example, students teased classmates who were too obedient, calling them “little preachers.” This peer teasing discouraged some students from showing visible piety, even if they believed in the values privately.

This social dynamic shows that peer acceptance strongly influences moral behavior. Adolescents tend to follow the group rather than authority figures. Teachers and parents recognized that building supportive peer environments, through group projects, mentoring, and student leadership, could help reduce this form of resistance.

**Table 1.** Research Findings

Theme / Focus Area	Operational Description	Key Activities or Indicators	Interpretation / Implication
<b>1. Classroom-Based Value Reinforcement</b>	Teachers integrate moral lessons into subject teaching and daily routines, emphasizing repetition and modeling.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Daily <i>kultum</i> or student reflections before lessons.</li> <li>- Linking moral themes (e.g., fairness, honesty) to class activities.</li> <li>- Use of nonverbal cues for discipline and reminders.</li> </ul>	Moral internalization grows through routine, contextual repetition, and modeling, rather than formal preaching.
<b>2. Ritualized Religious Habituation</b>	Structured religious practices are used as moral training and leadership development tools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Daily <i>shalat dhuha</i> with rotating roles (imam, muadzin, row organizer).</li> <li>- Weekly <i>halaqah</i> mentoring with open discussion on moral dilemmas.</li> </ul>	Repetition combined with reflection and role-taking builds responsibility, empathy, and spiritual maturity.
<b>3. Everyday Moral Habits and Peer Influence</b>	Moral behavior becomes habitual through informal school interactions and peer norms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Greeting teachers and guests with <i>salaam</i>.</li> <li>- Older students reminding juniors about manners.</li> <li>- Peer correction in minor misbehavior.</li> </ul>	Values become socially reinforced habits, sustained by positive peer culture rather than teacher control.
<b>4. Reinforcement Across School, Home, and Community</b>	Moral habits formed at school continue at home and in public through mutual reinforcement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Students encourage family prayer and courtesy.</li> <li>- Parents observe changes in daily conduct.</li> <li>- Community members note polite behavior in public.</li> </ul>	Character development is strongest when school, family, and community form a continuous moral ecosystem.
<b>5. Silent Compliance (Resistance)</b>	Students show obedience only under supervision; behavior fades when unobserved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Performing rituals correctly but losing focus after.</li> <li>- Doing tasks to avoid sanctions, not from conviction.</li> </ul>	Indicates surface conformity; calls for reflective dialogue to deepen understanding and sincerity.
<b>6. Moral Fatigue (Resistance)</b>	Repetition without variation leads to desensitization and loss of interest.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Boredom during repeated moral slogans.</li> <li>- Low emotional engagement in assemblies.</li> </ul>	Moral teaching must include novelty, relevance, and contextualization to maintain student motivation.
<b>7. Peer Counter-Culture (Resistance)</b>	Peer groups subtly resist moral norms by mocking overt piety or obedience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teasing of pious peers ("little preacher").</li> <li>- Avoidance of visible religious acts to maintain social acceptance.</li> </ul>	Peer influence can undermine moral compliance; schools need peer-based leadership and mentoring to create supportive group culture.

## DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reveal that the internalization of Islamic moral values within the two junior high schools is most effective when it transcends mere moral instruction and becomes woven into the everyday fabric of schooling. Rather than relying solely on isolated religion classes, the model observed embeds moral values through daily repetition, integrated curricula, social reinforcement, and meaningful participation. This matches the integrative-curricular approach in Islamic education, which holds that values such as honesty, justice, and responsibility should be integrated into all subjects and learning processes, not confined to a separate moral or religious class (Fatimah, 2019; Imelda, 2018). For example, the practice of beginning lessons with a short *kultum* or student-reflection on fairness, and then referring to that value later in group work, exemplifies how teachers made moral messages part of the cognitive and behavioural routine (“*We don’t teach values as a separate subject...*” – T03).

This approach is consistent with recent research in Indonesia showing that school-based character education works best when moral values are not just told but enacted and sustained through habit and culture (Furqon & Hanif, 2022; Muniroh, 2021). In particular, the method of using nonverbal cues (e.g., a teacher raising a hand in prayer gesture to quiet the class) and observing that such cues transferred to the home environment (parent P04) shows how moral habits can cross contexts and become part of identity rather than mere compliance. Habitualization of Islamic etiquette is described in the theoretical review as a strategic pathway to internalise values (Suhrawardi, 2020; Apiyani, 2022; Nurkholis & Santosa, 2024).

Moving to the ritualized religious habituation component, the daily communal *shalat dhuha*, Qur’an reading, and weekly *halaqah* mentoring vividly reflect the experiential and reflective model of moral education. Students are not only required to perform rituals but are given leadership roles (imam, muadzin, row organiser) and reflect afterwards on moral implications (“*At first I was nervous ... but after doing it many times it feels normal.*” S02). The combination of repetition (habit formation) and dialogue (reflection) aligns with the experiential learning cycle (Kolb) and Schön’s reflection-in-action concept: concrete experience (ritual), reflective observation (*halaqah* dialogue), abstract conceptualization (linking amanah/trust to classroom roles), and active experimentation (applying greeting habits, leadership roles). It also signifies the role modelling and habitualization theory (Bandura; Astutik & Aziz, 2023) where students observe behaviours, imitate them, and gradually internalize them. The finding that “*When students start the day by reading the Qur’an, it softens their hearts and makes them more mindful during class.*” (T04) reinforces the affective dimension, moral internalization is not just cognitive but emotional and embodied.

In the everyday moral habits and peer influence domain, the findings show that student behaviour, such as greeting teachers and engaging peers, became part of their identity (“*It feels strange if I don’t greet my teacher now.*” S11). The power of peer reminders (“*Friends’ reminders work better than parents’ scolding.*” P02) signals that peer culture is a significant normative force in moral education. The theoretical frameworks (Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems; Vygotsky’s socio-

cultural theory) help interpret this: moral development occurs not just via teacher–student interaction, but via social interactions within peer groups and across contexts. As Bronfenbrenner indicates, the microsystem (peer group) and mesosystem (peer-school interrelations) matter. This echoes empirical studies showing that the social environment strongly shapes character education (Marzuni & Romelah, 2023; Feranina & Komala, 2022).

The reinforcement across school, home and community layer underscores the ecological-collaborative approach: for internalization to be lasting, values must be supported across multiple contexts. The observation that students reminded siblings to pray *dhuha* at home (P01), and community recognition of polite student queues at the mosque (C02), demonstrates how school habits translate into broader social behaviour. Conversely, the admission that long breaks without home reinforcement require “starting over” (T09) highlights the fragility when the ecosystem is incomplete. This aligns with policy research highlighting that character education in Indonesian curricula often remains normative and top-down, lacking concrete strategies or full home/community linkage (Alhamuddin, 2024).

Finally, the exploration of forms of student resistance, silent compliance, moral fatigue, and peer counter-culture, provides valuable insights into the limits of moral internalization. Silent compliance (obedient when watched, indifferent when not) suggests surface-level internalization and is consistent with critiques of moral education that emphasise indoctrination rather than critical engagement (Al Hamdani, 2021). Moral fatigue, when repetitive moral messaging becomes background noise, shows that even strong routines can lose effect if not refreshed or contextualized. Peer counter-culture, students mocking overt piety or avoiding visible moral behaviour for social acceptance, illustrates the role of peer norms in undermining value uptake unless peers themselves are engaged positively. These forms of resistance highlight the need for reflective dialogue, relevance and peer leadership strategies rather than purely prescriptive moral instruction.

Taken together, these findings suggest that a systematic character development model must not only embed moral values across curriculum and routines, but also continually engage students meaningfully, connect to their lived experience, involve multiple environments (school, family, community), and actively address forms of resistance through dialogue and peer engagement.

This study advances the field by providing a detailed, operationalised model of how Islamic moral values can be systematically internalised in junior high schools through layered mechanisms: classroom reinforcement, ritualised habituation, peer and everyday habits, and cross-context reinforcement. Few prior studies have mapped so clearly the interlocking routines (prayer, Qur’an reading, greeting habits) and associated resistance forms within Indonesian junior secondary schools. In particular, the identification of silent compliance, moral fatigue, and peer counter-culture as specific resistance types offers a nuanced contribution to character education scholarship.

For practitioners (teachers, school leaders), the research implies that moral education must go beyond formal instruction: (1) embed values into everyday academics and social routines, (2) design ritualised roles that give students responsibility, (3) engage peers as normative agents, (4) ensure continuity across

school, home and community, and (5) monitor and respond to resistance via reflective and dialogic methods. For policymakers, the study suggests curriculum frameworks (such as the 2013 and Merdeka curricula) should include clearer pedagogical guidelines and contextual strategies rather than rely on broad “value internalization” language.

Academically, the study enriches theory by bridging integrative-curricular, habituation, experiential/reflective, and ecological-collaborative frameworks within one empirical model of character development in an Islamic school context. It confirms the synergy of these frameworks and adds empirical specificity to how they play out in daily school life. For the Indonesian education context, the study provides an evidence-based template for holistic moral character development in junior high schools, potentially informing design of school programmes, teacher training, and community partnerships.

## CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the integration of Islamic moral values into holistic education in Indonesian junior high schools is most effective when implemented through a systematic and multi-layered character development model. Moral internalization does not occur through instruction alone but through continuous practice, repetition, and meaningful participation that make values part of students’ lived experiences rather than abstract knowledge.

First, classroom-based value reinforcement provides the foundation for moral habituation. Teachers integrate Islamic moral values such as honesty, patience, and fairness into academic lessons and daily routines through *kultum* (short reflections), contextual repetition, and nonverbal cues. This supports the integrative-curricular approach, where moral learning becomes habitual and reflective, not merely theoretical.

Second, ritualized religious habituation, particularly through *shalat dhuha*, Qur’an recitation, and *halaqah* mentoring, strengthens moral formation by linking spiritual devotion with discipline, leadership, and empathy. These repeated yet reflective practices transform worship into character training, aligning spiritual understanding with ethical behavior.

Third, everyday moral habits and peer influence demonstrate that moral learning extends beyond the classroom. When students greet teachers voluntarily, remind peers politely, and model courtesy, values become internalized as social norms. Positive peer dynamics play a crucial role in reinforcing moral behavior consistent with socio-cultural and ecological learning theories.

Fourth, cross-context reinforcement between school, home, and community ensures the sustainability of moral habits. When parents and communities support school-initiated values, moral practices such as prayer and courtesy are maintained and strengthened. Conversely, discontinuity between these environments weakens internalization, showing that character formation requires a cohesive moral ecosystem.

Finally, student resistance, in forms such as silent compliance, moral fatigue, and peer counter-culture, illustrates that moral education is a negotiated process. Resistance should not be viewed as failure but as feedback, signaling the need for more dialogic, relevant, and engaging approaches to value learning.

In summary, this study formulates a systematic model for integrating Islamic moral values through four interconnected mechanisms: (1) curricular and routine-based reinforcement, (2) ritualized habituation linked with reflection, (3) experiential and peer-supported moral practice, and (4) ecological collaboration among school, family, and community. This model bridges Islamic pedagogical principles with modern character education theory. Its novelty lies in operationalizing these dimensions within a unified framework for junior high school contexts. The implications highlight that moral education must be experiential, collaborative, and contextually sustained, while the contribution of this research offers educators and policymakers a replicable model for cultivating spiritually grounded and socially responsible young Muslims.

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