



Religiosity as an Effort to Shape Students' Positive Behavior at UPTD SDN 54 Barru

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Abstract:

This study examines how Islamic Religious Education (Pendidikan Agama Islam, PAI) develops religiosity and how participants perceive its association with pupils' positive behavior at UPTD SDN 54 Barru, South Sulawesi. Using a qualitative single-case study design, data were collected through non-participant observation, semi-structured interviews with the principal, PAI teachers, pupils in Grades V and VI, and parents or guardians, and a review of learning documents and school program records. Data were analyzed through condensation, display, and conclusion drawing and verification, with credibility supported by source, technique, and time triangulation, researcher diligence, and member checking. The findings identify five mutually reinforcing mechanisms: teacher exemplarity, habituation of religious activities, contextual and practical PAI learning, a supportive religious school culture, and school-family collaboration. Across these mechanisms, participants and observations linked religiosity to greetings and prayers, regular worship, politeness, respect, discipline, honesty, care, and responsibility. These findings should be interpreted as context-bound qualitative associations rather than evidence of causal effects. The study's main contribution is an integrated account of how religious knowledge, worship practice, adult modeling, school culture, and family reinforcement operate together as an internalization process in a public elementary-school setting. The results suggest that religiosity is educationally meaningful when religious practices are explained, modeled, practiced, and reinforced across school and home contexts..

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Introduction (مقدمة)

Primary education is a formative arena in which children connect knowledge, values, and

everyday conduct. Educational success therefore cannot be reduced to academic attainment, because well-designed character education is also associated with behavioral outcomes such as integrity, compassion, and self-discipline (Jeynes, 2019). Recent international evidence shows that universal school-based social and emotional interventions can improve students' behavior, peer relationships, and school climate, although effects depend on context and implementation quality (Cipriano et al., 2023). A developmental-systems synthesis likewise emphasizes coherent relationships and supports across classrooms, schools, families, and communities (Darling-hammond et al., 2020). Character formation involves helping learners understand moral values and creating sustained opportunities to practise them in context (Meindl, Quirk, & Graham, 2018; Pike, et al., 2021). Within Islamic Religious Education (Pendidikan Agama Islam, PAI), this process is closely associated with religiosity. Contemporary research treats adolescent religiosity as multidimensional, encompassing interrelated beliefs, public and private practices, exclusivity, and religious salience rather than ritual observance alone (Pearce, et al., 2017). Its educational significance becomes visible when religious and spiritual orientations are connected with prosociality and everyday responsibility (Kor, et al., 2019; Pandya, 2017).

Educational discussion has moved beyond treating PAI as content transmission toward considering how learning environments enable values to be interpreted and lived. Recent scholarship similarly calls for Islamic religious education to engage spiritual and moral meanings rather than remain confined to non-reflective devotional transmission (Saada & Magadlah, 2021; Sahin, 2018). Islamic education can strengthen children's character when instruction addresses their experiences and permits practice (D. Zalsabella et al., 2023). Evidence from a full-day-school setting indicates that religious and honest character may be reinforced through Islamic education within a supportive environment (Setyaningsih & Sabiq, 2021). Indonesian elementary-school studies likewise show that religious values are internalized through habituation, integrated school programming, and collaboration among schools, parents, and communities (Achadah, Wahidmurni, & Yasin, 2022; Widiyono, 2022). These perspectives locate character education at the intersection of curriculum, pedagogy, relationships, and institutional culture (Goldberg et al., 2019; Setyaningsih & Sabiq, 2021). They also suggest that repeated conduct acquires educational meaning through guided participation, role modelling, and reflection (Hussin & Razak, 2024; Osman, 2019).

A central problem is the gap between knowing religious teachings and embodying them in everyday conduct. Within PAI, this gap is especially important because religiosity cannot be reduced to knowledge of prayers, rules, or ritual procedures; it also involves the salience of religious values in decisions, relationships, and daily responsibilities. Predominantly verbal instruction may support recall without necessarily producing observable changes in conduct. Internalization therefore requires affective engagement, moral reflection, guided practice, and consistent social reinforcement (Saada & Magadlah, 2021; Pearce et al., 2017). Previous studies report associations between religiosity and prosocial or moral outcomes, but these relationships are neither automatic nor uniform. Meta-analytic evidence shows only a small overall association between religiosity and prosociality and stronger effects when prosociality is self-reported rather than behaviorally observed (Kelly, et al., 2024). Other evidence indicates that external religious attendance without corresponding internal spirituality is not uniformly protective (Malinakova et al., 2019). These findings make the educational process linking PAI, religiosity, and positive behavior a more important object of inquiry than ritual participation alone.

The literature addresses this problem through internalization rather than information transfer alone. Character values need to be understood, modelled, practised, and reinforced while learners develop the capacity to apply them in context (Meindl et al., 2018; Pike et al., 2021). In PAI, this entails integrating religious understanding with reflection, worship competence, and social conduct (Saada & Magadlah, 2021; Zalsabella et al., 2023). Pupils also encounter moral

messages in rules, routines, relationships, and adult conduct; primary-school research therefore identifies role-model pedagogy as an important part of an integrated character curriculum (Hussin & Razak, 2024; Osman, 2019). Accordingly, teacher exemplarity, repeated religious activities, contextual instruction, and school-home continuity are complementary approaches. Together, they allow pupils to interpret values, observe their enactment, rehearse practices, and receive feedback. This coordinated logic is consistent with whole-school and family-school evidence emphasizing continuity across curriculum, school ethos, and home support (Goldberg et al., 2019; Sheridan et al., 2019). At the organizational level, character-strength development depends on the interplay of curriculum, relationships, teacher support, and school systems (Lavy, 2020), while family-school engagement interventions can strengthen parent-teacher relationships (Smith, 2022).

Previous work has applied specific strategies to this task. Setyaningsih and Sabiq (2021) examined PAI practices for strengthening religious and honest character in a full-day school environment, highlighting reinforcement beyond isolated classroom explanations. (Zalsabella et al., 2023) emphasized Islamic education's importance for children's character and moral values. In another Indonesian Islamic primary-school case, Husnaini et al., 2020) identified habituation and a synergistic relationship between school and parents as central to religious character formation. At the broader conceptual level, religiosity research emphasizes multiple interrelated dimensions rather than a single measure of observance (Pearce et al., 2017), while primary moral-education research shows the potential of carefully structured role models and habituation (Osman, 2019). Whole-school evidence further supports coordinating curriculum, school ethos, and family or community partnerships instead of relying on an isolated program (Goldberg et al., 2019). Recent Indonesian cases reinforce these components: character values were internalized through habituated worship and school programs (Achadah et al., 2022) Classroom teachers combined modelling with routine religious activities (Solihah, et al., 2024) and school culture was sustained through collaboration with parents and communities (Widiyono, 2022). Together, these approaches support explanation, modelling, habituation, practice, and social reinforcement rather than a ritual-only or knowledge-only model.

Nevertheless, the most closely related literature leaves an analytical gap. Indonesian studies have established the relevance of PAI, habituation, teacher modelling, and school-parent collaboration to religious and moral character (Achadah et al., 2022; Husnaini et al., 2020; Setyaningsih & Sabiq, 2021; Solihah et al., 2024), while broader scholarship conceptualizes religiosity as multidimensional and cautions against assuming a direct or universal behavioral effect (Kelly et al., 2024; Malinakova et al., 2019; Pearce et al., 2017). What remains less clearly explained is how these elements operate together as a process: how religious knowledge is translated into practice, how teacher example gives values observable form, how routines become meaningful rather than merely repetitive, and how school culture and family reinforcement sustain or weaken behavioral expression. This gap is particularly relevant in a public elementary-school context, where PAI is one component of a wider institutional environment rather than the organizing identity of an Islamic school. The novelty of the present study lies in analyzing five components - teacher exemplarity, religious habituation, contextual PAI learning, school religious culture, and family collaboration - as an interconnected internalization system and in tracing how participants associate that system with pupils' observable positive behavior across school and home settings.

Against this background, the study aims to analyze how religiosity develops through PAI and how this process is associated with positive behavior among pupils at UPTD SDN 54 Barru. Specifically, it identifies the mechanisms through which religious values are internalized, the behaviors associated with those mechanisms, and the conditions that support or constrain their implementation. Two questions guide the inquiry: (1) How is pupils' religiosity developed through

PAI, teacher exemplarity, religious habituation, school culture, and family collaboration at UPTD SDN 54 Barru? (2) How are these processes associated, in participants' accounts and observed school practices, with courtesy, discipline, honesty, care, respect, and responsibility? By framing the second question in terms of association rather than causal effect, the study remains consistent with its qualitative single-case design while offering a context-sensitive explanation of how religious education may function as a shared school culture rather than as the responsibility of the PAI classroom alone.



Method (منهج)

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative, single-case study design to examine how religiosity was developed through Islamic Religious Education (Pendidikan Agama Islam, PAI) and how this process was associated with pupils' positive behavior. A case study was appropriate because the inquiry addressed how value internalization occurred within the natural setting of one bounded school and required attention to the interactions among classroom learning, religious routines, teacher exemplarity, school culture, pupil experience, and family support (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Yin, 2018). The case was bounded institutionally by UPTD SDN 54 Barru and temporally by the data-collection period. The design was interpretive: it sought to reconstruct participants' experiences and identify recurring process patterns rather than estimate statistical effects or make population-level generalizations.

Study Site and Participants

The study was conducted from August to October 2025 at UPTD SDN 54 Barru, located on Jalan Pekkae Poros Barru-Soppeng, Tellumpanua Village, Tanete Rilau District, Barru Regency, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. Participants were purposively selected based on direct involvement in, or knowledge of, the school's religious-education practices. The participant groups comprised the principal, PAI teachers, pupils in Grades V and VI, and parents or guardians. The principal and PAI teachers were included because they planned, implemented, or supervised PAI and school religious activities; pupils were included because they directly experienced the practices under study; and parents or guardians were included to provide evidence about continuity between school and home. A consistent final numerical count of informants was not available in the research record used for this report, so no unverifiable sample size is stated. This limitation restricts reproducibility and is explicitly acknowledged rather than retrospectively reconstructed.

Data Collection

Data were generated through non-participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and document review. Observations focused on PAI lessons, routine religious activities, worship practices, and teacher-pupil interactions. Semi-structured interviews explored experiences of value internalization, perceived behavioral expressions, school-home continuity, supporting conditions, and implementation barriers. Interviewing followed common thematic domains rather than a rigid questionnaire so participants could elaborate on their experiences; however, interview duration was not consistently recorded and therefore is not reported as a fixed procedural parameter. Documentary materials included learning plans and instructional materials, records of school religious programs, and available evidence of school activities. The three techniques complemented each other: observation documented enacted practice, interviews captured participant interpretations, and documents provided institutional context. Data collection was organized around four domains derived from the research questions: practices

used to develop religiosity, manifestations of positive behavior, consistency between school and home, and factors supporting or constraining implementation.

Data Analysis and Trustworthiness

Data analysis proceeded concurrently with data collection and followed the interactive framework of (Salmia, et al., 2026): data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. We first reviewed records for evidence of religious activities, internalization strategies, behavioral manifestations, school-home reinforcement, supporting factors, and barriers. The team then organized related evidence into categories representing teacher exemplarity, religious habituation, practical and contextual PAI learning, school culture, family collaboration, and observed positive behaviors. Patterns were compared across participant groups and across observation, interview, and document sources. Theme development involved iterative movement between coded extracts, candidate categories, and the complete record, consistent with contemporary thematic-analysis guidance (Kiger & Varpio, 2020; Yundayani, Abdullah, Tandiana, & Sutrisno, 2021). The team refined interpretations by examining convergence, divergence, and negative cases before formulating conclusions. Credibility was strengthened through triangulation across sources, methods, and time; sustained observation and researcher diligence; peer discussion; negative-case analysis; and member checking (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Nowell, Norris, White, & Moules, 2017). The study report available for publication did not contain a formal ethics-committee approval number or sufficiently detailed documentation of consent procedures; therefore, no approval number or undocumented ethical procedure is claimed. This absence is treated as a reporting limitation and should be addressed explicitly in future research involving school-aged participants.

Table 1. Data analysis focus, sources, and techniques

Focus of analysis	Primary data sources	Collection techniques	Analysis output
The practice of establishing religiosity	PAI teachers, principals, students	Interviews, observations, documentation	Example, habituation, practical learning, school culture
Positive behavior of students	Students, teachers, parents	Interviews and observations	Greetings and prayers, worship, courtesy, discipline, honesty, caring, responsible
School-home consistency	Teachers, principals, parents	Interviews and documentation	Collaboration and continuity of habituation
Supporters and obstacles	All groups of informants	Data triangulation	Religious environment, role of teachers, time constraints, influence of the outside environment

Source: Processed from the research data.

Result (نتائج)

The formation of religiosity as an integrated process

Evidence from observations, interviews, and school documents converged on an integrated pattern of religiosity formation rather than a single dominant activity. Observation records documented routine prayers, Qur'anic reading, worship practice, and teacher-pupil interactions; interviews with school personnel described teacher example, instructional guidance, and school-wide reinforcement; and parent accounts extended the pattern into the home. Program

documents further corroborated organized religious activities. Taken together, these sources indicate that religiosity was constructed through repeated interaction among teaching, practice, role modeling, institutional routines, and family reinforcement. This integrated pattern accords with a developmental-systems view of children's learning (Darling-hammond et al., 2020) and with evidence that character strengths are fostered through interacting student, teacher, and organizational mechanisms (Lavy, 2020).

Teacher's example as a source of moral learning

Teacher exemplarity emerged across interview and observational evidence as a primary source of moral learning. Participants described teachers as facilitators and motivators whose speech, discipline, politeness, caring conduct, worship practices, and consistent adherence to school rules were visible to pupils. Classroom and school observations supported the importance of this modeling by showing that values discussed in PAI were also enacted in routine interactions. For elementary pupils, such consistency gives concrete form to abstract moral expectations: honesty and responsibility become more credible when the adult who teaches them is observed acting accordingly. Comparable primary-school research identifies exemplary conduct, teamwork, reinforcement, and structured activities as key teacher practices (Akram, et al, 2023), while an Indonesian case shows that class teachers can operationalize religious character through daily habituation (Solihah et al., 2024).

These findings expand the meaning of PAI learning: teachers not only transfer knowledge, but also bring value to educational relationships. Exemplary builds the credibility of moral messages and provides learners with references on how religious values are applied in everyday situations. In the framework of value education, the consistency of adult figures helps values move from the stage of knowing to believing and doing.

Habituation of religious activities

Religious habituation was the most visible recurring mechanism in the observation data. Activities included praying before and after learning, exchanging greetings, reading the Qur'an and short surahs, memorizing daily prayers, performing duha prayer, and participating in congregational prayer. Interviews with teachers and school leaders indicated that these activities were intentionally repeated so that pupils became familiar with the procedures and expectations of worship. The value of repetition, however, lay not simply in frequency: observations suggested that routines also structured punctuality, order, cleanliness, and coordinated participation. This mechanism is consistent with Indonesian case evidence in which congregational worship, Qur'anic reading, and related routines were used to internalize religious character (Achadah et al., 2022; Salmia, Sudarmin, 2022; Solihah et al., 2024).

Habituation also contains a social dimension. Prayer and congregational worship practice order, wait for their turn, follow the imam or instructions, maintain cleanliness, and respect for friends. Memorization of letters and prayers strengthens knowledge, while joint practice builds courage and a sense of belonging to the school culture. Thus, ritual activities function as well as a medium for the formation of discipline, togetherness, and responsibility.

Contextual and practical PAI learning

Observation of PAI learning and interview accounts indicated the use of short lectures, discussion, question-and-answer activities, quizzes, educational games, memorization, and guided practice of ablution and prayer. This variation reduced reliance on verbal explanation alone and created opportunities for pupils to demonstrate, receive correction, and connect religious concepts with familiar situations. Practical worship activities supplied observable evidence of procedural learning, while discussion and questioning enabled teachers to clarify the moral meaning of actions. The convergence of interview and observation evidence therefore supports interpreting

PAI as both cognitive instruction and guided practice. This active, scaffolded, and context-linked instruction aligns with evidence that learning transfers more effectively when explicit guidance is combined with meaningful participation and feedback (Darling-hammond et al., 2020).

The integration of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects is seen in the learning sequence: students understand the teachings, develop an attitude of accepting and appreciating values, and then put them into practice. These findings support the view that religious education needs to engage the learner more fully. Knowledge remains important, but its educational force depends on reflection and experiences that allow values to be interpreted, lived, and practised (Saada & Magadlah, 2021; Zalsabella et al., 2023). Meta-analytic work on school-based interventions also suggests that active-learning and problem-solving components are associated with stronger intrapersonal and interpersonal outcomes (Mertens, Deković, Leijten, Van Londen, & Reitz, 2020).

Religious culture and family collaboration

School-level evidence showed that PAI classroom learning was reinforced by a wider religious culture. Interviews with the principal and teachers identified Islamic holiday commemorations, pesantren kilat activities, congregational prayers, and social-service activities as ways to extend values beyond scheduled PAI lessons. Documentary records of school programs supported the institutional presence of these activities, while observations indicated that participation involved members of the broader school community. In this case, the school context therefore functioned as a cue environment in which values were repeatedly encountered across settings. Similar Indonesian evidence shows that religious school culture is sustained through the combined design of school environments, curricular integration, and collaboration (Widiyono, 2022), while school-wide character development requires alignment of organizational resources and teacher support (Lavy, 2020; Salmia, et al., 2023).

Parent interviews provided the principal evidence for school-home continuity. Parents described children as becoming more accustomed to greetings, more regular in prayer, and more respectful at home. At the same time, school informants emphasized the importance of parents continuing routines introduced at school. These accounts do not establish that school activities caused the reported behavior; rather, they show perceived consistency between school practices and behavior observed in the family setting. They also reveal a boundary condition: when home routines support school expectations, pupils encounter repeated reinforcement, whereas inconsistent habits or external influences may weaken internalization. Religiosity develops within relational systems, and adolescents' relationships with parents are associated with their beliefs and participation (Sârbu, et al., 2021). Meta-analytic evidence further indicates that structured family-school engagement can improve parent-teacher relationships and communication (Cerny, Friedman, & Smith, 2014).

Table 1. Data analysis focus, sources, and techniques

Teacher role model	Religious habituation	Internalization of religiosity
		Religious knowledge • value appreciation • worship skills
Contextual PAI Learning	School culture	Positive behavior
		Greetings and prayers • worship • courtesy • discipline • honesty • caring • responsibility

Family collaboration	Repeated reinforcement	Consistency at school and home
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Source: Synthesis of research findings. The arrow indicates the process relationship, not the magnitude of the statistical influence.

Manifestation of religiosity in positive behavior

The qualitative evidence indicated four interrelated domains in which religiosity was expressed. Cognitively, pupils demonstrated knowledge of daily prayers, prayer readings, short surahs, and the religious basis of expected conduct. Affectively, participants described interest in religious activities, willingness to worship together, politeness, and respect for others. Psychomotor evidence appeared in pupils' performance of ablution, prayer, recitation, and participation in religious activities. Social-moral expression was reported or observed in discipline, honesty, care, respect for teachers and parents, and responsibility. These domains represent observed and reported associations within the case rather than measured causal effects. The pattern is directionally consistent with Indonesian evidence linking religiosity with adolescent prosocial behavior (Widiastuti, 2021). Still, recent meta-analyses show that such associations are modest and sensitive to how prosociality is measured (Kosasih, et al., 2024).

The main finding of this study is not that rituals automatically produce character, but rather that religious practices that are guided, explained, exemplified, and associated with social life can be a vehicle for practicing positive behavior. For example, congregational prayers contain exercises of order and togetherness; greetings build respect; prayer before learning forms readiness and awareness; Social service provides space for care. Religiosity thus works as a value orientation that provides moral reasoning, habits that provide exercise, and culture that reinforces behavior. This distinction is important because external participation alone is not uniformly associated with favorable behavior (Malinakova et al., 2019), and the religiosity-prosociality association is substantially weaker for directly observed behavior than for self-report (Kelly et al., 2024).

Table 2. *The relationship between religious practices and positive behavior of students*

Practice/strategy	The process of value education	Observed positive behaviors
Prayers and greetings	Repetition, awareness of starting/closing activities, respect	Polite, orderly, respectful of teachers and parents
Congregational prayers and duha prayers	Worship Practice, Time Discipline, Group Orderliness	Discipline, responsibility, togetherness
Reading the Qur'an, short letters, and daily prayers	Strengthening knowledge and courage to perform	Diligent, confident, responsible for learning
The practice of ablution and prayer	Learning through experience and direct correction	Independent, orderly, skilled in carrying out worship
Teacher role model	Behavioral imitation and message-action consistency	Honest, polite, caring, rule compliant
Social and cultural service of the school	Application of values in social relations	Empathy, cooperation, care
Parental assistance	Cross-environmental reinforcement	Consistency of behavior at school and home

Source: Processed from observation and interview data.

Supporting factors and barriers

Participants consistently identified supporting factors across accounts: teacher commitment, a religiously supportive school environment, varied learning methods, principal support, and parental involvement. Their significance was cumulative. Classroom explanation gave values meaning; teacher example made them observable; repeated routines created opportunities for rehearsal; school-wide activities provided social reinforcement; and family continuation extended practice beyond school. The evidence therefore suggests that implementation quality and alignment among actors were more important than the sheer number of religious activities. This layered interpretation accords with reviews showing that character development depends on coordinated curriculum, relationships, teacher preparation, organizational support, and implementation quality (Cipriano et al., 2023; Mertens et al., 2020).

The same data also revealed limiting conditions: restricted instructional and activity time, variation in pupils' backgrounds, influences outside school, and dependence on teacher consistency. These factors help explain why religious practice may not translate uniformly into positive behavior. A routine can remain superficial when its moral meaning is not discussed, when adult modeling is inconsistent, or when reinforcement differs sharply between school and home. The public-school context of UPTD SDN 54 Barru is therefore analytically important: PAI operates within a plural set of school routines and limited instructional time, making whole-school and family support necessary for continuity. The findings point to institutionalization - shared schedules, role distribution, communication with families, and simple formative observation of behavior - rather than reliance on individual teacher commitment. Contemporary meta-analysis likewise identifies contextual heterogeneity and implementation quality as moderators of school-based social and emotional outcomes (Cipriano et al., 2023).

Theoretical and practical implications

Theoretically, the findings show that religiosity in elementary-school pupils is more accurately understood as a multidimensional process. Religious knowledge provides a framework of meaning; appreciation shapes the acceptance of values; rituals give repeated experiences; and moral consequences become visible in social behavior. This interpretation is consistent with contemporary research that distinguishes interrelated dimensions of belief, public and private practice, exclusivity, and religious salience (Pearce et al., 2017). The present findings also resonate with longitudinal and intervention evidence linking spirituality or spiritual education with prosociality, while keeping the direction and mechanism of that relationship open to contextual analysis (Kor et al., 2019; Pandya, 2017). The relationship among dimensions was mediated in this case by example and environmental reinforcement, a pattern compatible with research on role modelling and family-school collaboration (Osman, 2019; Sheridan et al., 2019). At the same time, the small, measurement-sensitive average association identified across a large body of research cautions against treating religiosity as a sufficient cause of prosocial conduct (Kelly et al., 2024), even though Indonesian adolescent evidence reports a significant association (Widiastuti, 2021).

Practically, schools need to: integrate behavioral goals into PAI learning; maintaining religious routines with explanations of meaning; involve non-PAI teachers in exemplarity; provide opportunities for practice and reflection; build communication with parents; and evaluate progress based on observation notes, conversations with children, and family feedback. Evaluations should not turn religiosity into mere obedience scores, but are used to understand the development, need for mentoring, and consistency of students' behavior.

Research Limitations

This research was bounded to a single public elementary school, so its findings are intended as a contextual explanation rather than a basis for statistical generalization. We did not have a

consistent final informant count, individual interview durations, a complete coding matrix, or a formal ethics-approval identifier to report. In addition, the authors derived perceived behavioral changes primarily from observation and participant testimony rather than longitudinal or experimental measurement. Consequently, the study cannot determine the magnitude or causality of the relationship between religiosity and positive behavior. Future research should employ multi-case or longitudinal designs, document participant and ethical procedures more fully, incorporate pupils' voices more extensively, and use context-sensitive behavioral observation rubrics alongside qualitative evidence.



Discussion (مناقشة)

The central analytical finding is that religiosity at UPTD SDN 54 Barru was not defined by ritual frequency alone, but by the coordination of meaning, modeling, repeated practice, institutional reinforcement, and family continuity. Teacher exemplarity, habituation, contextual PAI instruction, school culture, and family collaboration repeatedly exposed pupils to similar expectations across settings. This configuration helps explain why the data associated religious practice with both devotional conduct and social behaviors such as courtesy, discipline, honesty, care, respect, and responsibility. The mechanism is interpretive rather than causal: religious knowledge supplied a moral vocabulary, practice created opportunities for rehearsal, adult behavior made expectations observable, and cross-setting reinforcement increased consistency.

This interpretation both supports and qualifies multidimensional accounts of religiosity. Pearce et al. (2017) distinguish belief, public and private practice, exclusivity, and salience; the present case shows how these dimensions can become educationally connected through school routines. Yet the findings do not support the stronger proposition that participation in religious activities necessarily produces positive behavior. Meta-analytic evidence reports only a small average association between religiosity and prosociality and weaker associations when conduct is directly observed (Kosasih et al., 2024), while religious attendance without internal spirituality is not consistently protective (Malinakova et al., 2019). The present data help explain this qualification: rituals appeared educationally meaningful when teachers explained their moral purpose, modeled corresponding conduct, provided opportunities for guided practice, and connected worship with responsibilities toward others. Without these mediating processes, repetition may remain procedural rather than internalized.

Teacher exemplarity is therefore best understood as a credibility mechanism. When teachers' speech, discipline, worship, fairness, and caring behavior aligned with the values communicated in PAI, pupils encountered a consistent relationship between moral language and observable action. Habituation, by contrast, provided a rehearsal mechanism. Greetings, prayer, orderly participation, cleanliness, and social service repeatedly placed pupils in situations requiring respect, self-regulation, cooperation, or care. Contextual instruction supplied the interpretive mechanism by explaining why these practices mattered. These mechanisms are mutually dependent: repetition without explanation risks formalism, explanation without modeling risks inconsistency, and modeling without practice opportunities may remain observational. This analytical distinction extends previous work on role models, habituation, and primary moral education (Akram et al., 2023; Osman, 2019; Solihah et al., 2024) by clarifying the different functions each component performs.

The school context also explains both the process's strengths and its limits. UPTD SDN 54 Barru is a public elementary school in which PAI has limited formal instructional time; consequently, the internalization of religious values depended on activities and relationships beyond the PAI classroom. Principal support, school-wide religious programs, and participation

by non-PAI teachers expanded the temporal and social reach of the values being taught. At the same time, limited time, differences in pupils' family backgrounds, external influences, and variation in adult consistency constrained uniform outcomes. The case therefore does not show that a particular set of religious activities universally produces character, but explains why a coordinated whole-school configuration may make value messages more coherent in one institutional setting. This interpretation is compatible with whole-school evidence emphasizing alignment among curriculum, ethos, relationships, and family or community partnerships (Goldberg et al., 2019).

School-family continuity functioned as both a reinforcing mechanism and a boundary condition. Parent accounts of greetings, prayer regularity, and respectful behavior at home suggest that some school practices carried across settings. Still, the study design cannot establish whether school religiosity programs caused these behaviors. More importantly, the data indicate that continuity depended on compatible expectations. When family routines supported school practices, pupils encountered the same values repeatedly; when reinforcement differed, or outside influences competed with school expectations, internalization was less stable. This finding helps explain why the number of religious activities alone is a poor indicator of educational effect. The coherence of messages and relationships across settings is consistent with family-school intervention research emphasizing communication, collaboration, and parent-teacher relationships (Sheridan et al., 2019; Smith, 2022).

Theoretically, the study frames religiosity as a context-dependent internalization process that links religious understanding with social behavior through three mediating functions: interpretation of values, guided behavioral rehearsal, and relational reinforcement. This framing connects multidimensional religiosity research (Pearce et al., 2017) with scholarship calling for Islamic religious education that develops reflective moral agency rather than devotional transmission alone (Saada & Magadlah, 2021; Şahin, 2026). Practically, the findings suggest that schools should align PAI objectives with observable behavioral goals, ensure routines are accompanied by explanations of meaning, involve teachers beyond PAI in consistent modeling, create opportunities for reflection and practice, and maintain communication with families. Evaluation should remain formative and context-sensitive, using observation, pupil reflection, and family feedback rather than reducing religiosity to ritual compliance scores.

These interpretations remain bounded by the design and reporting limitations. The evidence came from one school, and the study did not measure behavioral change longitudinally or experimentally. The absence of a consistently documented informant count, interview duration, complete coding matrix, and formal ethics-approval identifier further limits reproducibility. Accordingly, the study offers an analytically grounded account of perceived and observed associations rather than a causal estimate or a claim of broad generalizability. Its contribution is identifying a five-part internalization system and explaining that religious practices are most likely to acquire educational meaning when they are coherently explained, modeled, practiced, and reinforced across school and family contexts. Multi-case and longitudinal research is needed to examine whether this mechanism operates similarly across different school cultures and populations.



Conclusion (خاتمة)

The study identified five interconnected mechanisms through which religiosity was developed at UPTD SDN 54 Barru: teacher exemplarity, habituation of religious activities, contextual and practical PAI learning, a supportive religious school culture, and collaboration with families. Across interviews, observations, and documents, these mechanisms were associated with

pupils' greetings and prayers, regularity of worship, politeness, respect, discipline, honesty, care, and responsibility. Because the study used a qualitative single-case design, these findings indicate contextual associations and perceived patterns rather than causal effects of religiosity on behavior.

The practical implication is that schools should not treat religiosity as a set of isolated rituals or as the responsibility of PAI teachers alone. Religious routines are more educationally meaningful when teachers explain their moral purposes, model the same values in daily interactions, give pupils opportunities for guided practice and reflection, and families reinforce compatible expectations at home. At the same time, the findings should not be generalized uncritically beyond this school because the study involved one site and did not use longitudinal or experimental measures of behavioral change. Future research should test the proposed internalization mechanism across multiple school contexts and report participants, interview procedures, ethics, and behavioral evidence more fully.



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