

# The Strategy of Principal In Instilling Religious Character In Muhammadiyah Elementary School

*By Ani Dwi Astuti*



## The Strategy of Principal In Instilling Religious Character In Muhammadiyah Elementary School

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**Abstract:** The most recent research showed that religious character is a character that was considered most important by the people of Indonesia in facing the challenges of modern life. Therefore, the religious character was needed to be instilled in the young generation through various channels, especially at formal educational institutions. This study aimed to describe the principal's strategy in instilling religious character in students. This research was a type of qualitative research with a case study approach conducted at Al-Mujahidin Muhammadiyah Elementary School, a favourite elementary school in Wonosari Gunungkidul, Indonesia. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation. The collected data were analyzed by inductively interactive data analysis techniques. The results showed that the principal used four strategies in instilling character to students, namely exemplary strategies, habit forming, integration in teaching the classroom, and reinforcement in the form of reward and punishment. The findings of this study underlined the central role of the principal as a top leader in implementing religious character education in schools.

**Keywords:** Religious Character; Principal of elementary school; School as socialization agency

### Introduction

In the latest social development of Indonesian society, religious characters are considered essential to prepare for future generations (Azra, 2012; Suyatno et al., 2019). Many indicators reinforced the statement, for instance, the higher the religious program rating on government and private television, the women wear the veils in public places, the more developed of study assemblies, and the more popular the music contains religious messages. In the educational field, this phenomenon causes the change of parental choice of education, where the parents preferred to choose the school that contained a robust fundamental religion in sending their children to the school (Azra, 2012; Suyatno, 2015). The religious aspects become one of the main factors for the parents to prepare their young generation.

This phenomenon is also supported by the fact that the young Indonesian generation is currently experiencing a crisis of character. This phenomenon can be seen from various actions of the nation's age, such as corruption (Joseph, et al., 2016; Butt, 2017; Tidey, 2018; Prabowo et al., 2018), terrorism (Chernov Hwang, 2017; Sumpter et al., 2019), and violence (Nilan, 2016; Safaria, 2016; Safaria et al., 2016; Nualsomsri, 2018). The rise of corruption cases in Indonesia has occurred in the entire walks of life. Meanwhile, the emergence of acts of terrorism in the homeland lately indicates a misunderstanding toward the religion or a small proportion of terrorists have a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the faith. On the other hand, there has been an increase in cases of violence among adolescents, brawls, bullying, dishonesty, low respect for older people, poor use of language, decreased work ethic, and *Klithih*. *Klithih* is a term often used by the people of Yogyakarta when there is a crime that is in the form of anarchism that occurred on the highway and committed by teenagers, especially those who still occupy in school (Pamungkas, 2018; Sarwono, 2019). *Klithih* only exists in Yogyakarta that is known as the student city in Indonesia and is not available in other cities. Most of the perpetrators that the deviations and acts of violence, such as *klithih*, which currently occur are students. Based on the news published on [tribunjogja.com](http://tribunjogja.com), Yogyakarta Police succeeded in arresting five suspects in the action of *Klithih*, who were sad, they are still students and were known to be in junior high school (Syarifudin, 2017). This condition is the evidence of the decline in the younger nation character, which is replaced by greed and anarchist paradigms. The reality of acts of violence that occur in the world of education is also evidence that character education has not been appropriately implemented.

One of the efforts that can be done to handle the character education questionnaire (15) to foster religious character through education in the schools because the religious character is the main objective of the (4) plementation of national education. Article 3 of Regulation of Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2003 states that national education aims to develop the potential of students to become human beings who believe in and fear God Almighty, have a noble, be healthy, be knowledgeable, be capable, be creative, to be independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens.

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Schools have a huge role in the development of student character (Print, 2000; Nguyen, 2016). Schools that are imbued with the spirit of character education will be an effective place to form of individual's character, therefore, they can grow well in their society. Schools are expected to be able to form intelligent and good human beings, furthermore, the schools have a great responsibility in building character education for their students.

The implementation of character values in the schools requires an essential role of the principal. There are five key roles; the principal as an exciting catalyst, as a visionary motivator, as a controlled link, as a staunch implementer, and as a wise expert (Green & Cameron, 2008). As an enraptured catalyst, a school principal demands more focus on identifying the discrepancy from what it is and what it should be. On the other hand, observing the factual truth process that is poor in quality also becomes a way to carry out a good alteration. This role is effectively used in the restructuring process of the Organization, which facing the alteration in every activity can be well-identified. The role of the school principal as a visionary motivator demands to focus on utilizing the existing resources, both human resources and other natural resources. The school principal has a role in inspiring, motivating, and involving all of the school residents to involve in advance the school in the future by using emotional bonding and improve the collectivism among the school personnel. Also, a school principal as a restrained connector, it means that in this role, all of the school personnel can perform optimal communication both horizontally and vertically. This role also can build Subordinates' self-regulation so that they perform an excellent task without any order from their boss. The role of the school principal as a strong implementer emphasizes focusing on project executor. The principle that is always carried out in this role is timeliness, quality, and budget efficiency. Work that adheres to the plan will provide success for the school institution. The role of the headmaster as a (11) wise expert relates to innovation and creativity, where the headmaster focuses on creating a new concept or that is already in the school's strategic plan. The school principal plans a grand design until the school program is carried out (Green & Cameron, 2008).

The implementation of character education requires all school personnel to be role models for the students in daily learning activities. The effective role of the principal is needed in managing the school culture, one of the ways is by conditioning the whole school personnel to reflect the ideal model for their students. Another effort is to implement effective learning management that is integrated into each subject through the applied curriculum. The principal has (1) vital role in encouraging the realization of the school's vision, mission, goals, and targets through programs that are carried out in a planned and gradual manner (Mulyasa, 2016).

Every school has a different strategy in applying character education, especially related to how the character values are being a culture. Every school has a different culture in instilling the characters to the students. Serpa (2016) described that culture consists of three elements; artifacts, values, and key assumptions that are produced from time to time by a group of a certain society. A school is one of the agents that is used to bequeath a culture from a generation to another generation. As research conducted by Sativa (2018) about character education strategies based on religious values, it is carried out through three strategies by implementing self-development strategies (6) integrating subjects, school culture strategies. Of the two abovementioned studies, it can be concluded that every school has a basis in choosing the strategy of applying character education. An interesting strategy to study and explore is a religious character education strategy. The strategy of applying religious character education is useful to minimize deviant behavior.

One of the primary schools that has the vision to develop religious character education is Muhammadiyah Elementary School of Al Mujahidin, Wonosari. According to the observations that have been made (17) can be concluded that the school is highly committed to shaping student's religious character. This can be seen from the vision, mission, and goals of the school. The vision of Muhammadiyah Al Mujahidin Elementary School is "Excellent in achievement based on personal pious and morality". It can be understood that the vision of Muhammadiyah Al Mujahidin Elementary School is not only oriented towards intellectual intelligence but the formation of student character. The vision of the school also serves as the ideals, inspiration, motivation, and strength of all school members.

Muhammadiyah Al-Mujahidin Elementary School in Wonosari also has the flagship program, it called Tahfidzul Qur'an Juz 29 and 30. The program is expected to be able to bring students to the Qur'ani generation (*Islamic Generation*). Besides, the school has habitual programs that support religious character strengthening programs, including habitual Dhuha Prayer, obligatory prayer in congregation, queuing for food and ablution, reading inspirational stories, Tahsinul Qur'an, and class outing. Now, these programs, at the same time, become a school branding and an appeal for parents to put their children in the school. Based on the abovementioned background of the problem, the principal's strategy in instilling religious character in Muhammadiyah Al Mujahidin Elementary School of Wonosari is interesting to study.

Research Question:

Specifically, this study aims to answer the question, "how is the principal's strategy in instilling religious character in Muhammadiyah Al-Mujahidin Elementary School of Wonosari?"

### Literature Review

Religious character is considered as one of the essential values for Indonesian people (Suyatno et al., 2019). This character is considered to be one of the ways that can be used to equip young people in facing the challenges of the development and progress of the times. The stronger the foundation of religious character for the younger generation, the better provision in facing the challenges of the times.

Naim (2011: 124) revealed that religious values are the appreciation and implementation of religious teachings in daily life. More detailed than Naim, Glock, Charles, and Stark (1994) divided religious aspects into five dimensions; first, religious belief, namely believing in God and the things related to the world of supernatural and accepting the dogmatic views in the religious teachings. In this case, faith is the most fundamental dimension for followers of the religion. Second, religious practice (aspects of worship) is an aspect related to the level of attachment, which includes the frequency and intensity of many behaviors where the behavior has been fixed by religion, such as the procedures for performing Worship and religious rules. Third, religious feeling (an aspect of appreciation) is a description of someone's feeling that is felt in religion or how far a person can experience the religious ritual experience, such as solemnity when doing the prayers. Fourth, religious knowledge (aspects of knowledge) is an aspect related to understanding and knowledge of the teachings of someone's religion to add knowledge about the religion that he professes. Fifth, the Religious effect (the aspect of the practice) is the application of what he has learned from the religious teachings that he embraces further that is applied through attitudes and behavior in daily life.

This religious character is essential to be instilled in the younger generation through various strategies. Nurdin (2015) stated that the obstacles to implementing character education are actors who can not be role models. The role of educators, principals, and teachers as an example for students is a determining factor for the success of character education (Ulavere & Veisson, 2015).

### The Role of Principals in Instilling Religious Character

A Headmaster, as the top leader in the school, has a central role in mobilizing and organizing all of the school components in implementing character education. Ajmain (2016) stated that the principal's role in building student character education is as: (a) manager, that is, as a policymaker that can accommodate all of the students need toward character education; (b) the leader, that is, giving instructions and supervision, having the ability to make decisions and the ability to communicate; (c) encouraging the whole teachers and employees to be good character models for the entire students; (d) supporting the work of the school culture and character team in strengthening the implementation and acculturation of the values, norms, and habits of the character of the school environment; (e) an example that shows high commitment and focuses on curriculum development and activities in schools, and facilitating and encouraging teachers to continuously improve their competency so that character education can run effectively and efficiently.

### Principal's Strategy in Instilling Religious Character

To be successful, the principal needs to have and choose the right strategy in instilling religious character for the students. The principal's strategy in inculcating and developing religious character education can be carried out with continuous coaching in terms of modeling, teaching, and good reinforcement toward all of the school members,

including teachers, students, or employees (Widodo, 2018). According to Aslamiah (2015), character education can be instilled with special strategies for students with some strategies as follows:

### **Providing an Example**

In terminology, exemplary behavior means actions or everything that should be emulated or exemplified (Education, 1995). Exemplary behavior is an action or everything that can be imitated or followed by someone from someone else who does or makes it happen so that the person being followed is called an example. In this context, the exemplary behavior is an action that can be presented as an educational tool, that is a good example. Furthermore, it can be defined that the model is an educational strategy that is applied by giving a good example in real behavior.

Being a role model is part of an effective strategy in preparing and forming students morally, spiritually, and socially. A school principal and teacher is an ideal example in the student views whose behavior and courtesy will be imitated. All of the examples will be attached to the students themselves in the form of words, actions, material, sensory, and spiritual. However, the students who directly look at and involve the immoral education with their own eyes, even though they potentially have a good character and have received the strong basics of noble education, they will be lost their positive and laudable character.

In this case, the principal must be a role model for school residents and even parents. The principal also gives an example for teachers, employees, students, and even parents/guardians by putting forward a disciplined and assertive attitude in terms of time. The principal encourages all of the teachers and employees to be good character models for entire students. The spirit and hard work that the headmaster must have is highly influential for the realization of character education on the school condition and will be created in the school environment. The exemplary strategy in instilling character is classified into 2, namely exemplary directly and indirectly (Taklimudin, 2018).

#### **a) Direct strategy**

An example is directly carried out by the principal, where he becomes a role model for school residents and parents of students. The headmaster also gives an example for teachers, employees, students, and even parents/guardians (Widodo, 2018). Meanwhile, according to Posner (2004), examples directly given by the headmaster can be done by providing examples followed by actions and shared values. According to the principal, delivering a speech or narration from a leader in front of the supporters or subordinates is to encourage or talk about a great end goal or a promising future. The leader takes advantage of every opportunity to show an example of himself to others that he is committed to his values and aspirations. Exemplary school principal refers to how leaders make visions and values come true.

#### **b) Indirect strategy**

According to Hidayatullah (2010), the principal who gave a good example indirectly can be represented by people who are competent in their fields, such as teachers and employees. Meanwhile, according to Posner (2004), an example can be done indirectly by dividing power and freedom to others. A role model or a leader can make others feeling strong. The leader allows others to act responsibly for the group's success by increasing their competence and confidence in their abilities as well as listening to their ideas and following them up by involving them in important decisions and acknowledging also rewarding their contributions.

### **Forming a Habit**

A habit-forming strategy is a way that can be used to familiarize students with thinking, behaving, and acting under Islamic religious teachings (Arief, 2002). This strategy is highly practical in fostering and shaping the character of early childhood in increasing the habits in carrying out an activity in school. The nature of habit formation consists of experience and practice.

In educational psychology, the method of forming a habit is known as operant conditioning, teaching students to get used to commendable behavior, discipline, study hard, work hard, sincere, honest, and responsibility for every task that has been given. Forming a habit is something that is intentionally done repeatedly – furthermore, something can become a habit. Habit is actually about the experience of getting used to. Habituated behavior determines humanity as something special, which can save strength because it will become an inherent and spontaneous habit, moreover, the power can be used for various activities in every work and other activities (Mulyasa, 2003).

In daily life, forming a good habit is very important, because many people do and behave just because of the habit itself. Habit-forming behavior can encourage the people in accelerating behavior, without any habit, a person's life will grow slowly because before doing any action, the people must think first about what they will do. Forming a habit needs to be applied by the teacher in the process of character formation in order to familiarize students with good and laudable traits so that the activities carried out by students are recorded positively (Mulyasa, 2003). Further, Mulyasa (2003) stated that education through habits could be implemented as follows:

- a) Programmed activities in learning can be carried out with specific planning in a certain period to develop learners in personal, groups, or classical.
- b) Unprogrammed habituated activities include routine, spontaneous, and exemplary habits.

Except for habit formation through routine school activities, it is also carried out with appeals or school slogans. Following the opinion of Supraptiningrum and Agustini (2015), they stated that habit could be applied using appeals or aphorisms slogans in the school environment. With the slogans, aphorisms, and the motto posted on the walls of the school, it is expected to be able to create a learning environment that triggers students' enthusiasm in trying and learning to achieve their goals.

### Integration in School Teaching

In the opinion of Koesoema (2010; 2018), one of the character education methodologies is teaching. Teaching character education is in order to introduce theoretical knowledge about value concepts. Understanding this concept must be part of understanding character education itself. Because the students will learn a lot from understanding and description of the values that are understood by the teachers and educators in every meeting. Teaching in this context is to provide a clear understanding of what is goodness, fairness, and values, therefore, the students understand the intentions of goodness, justice, and values. Several phenomena often occur in society, somebody does not understand what is meant by goodness, justice, and values conceptually, however, somebody can practice in life without realizing it. Characteristic behavior does base itself on the conscious act of the agent in carrying out values. Although they do not yet have a clear concept of calm, the character values that have been done is an action worth if someone is doing it consciously, and with sufficient knowledge about what he did. One of the vital elements in character education is teaching these values so that students are able and have a conceptual understanding of the values of behavioral guides that can be developed in developing their character (Koesuma, 2010).

In terms of teaching, what must be done by the principal starts from motivating, communicating regularly, and continuously with the school staff about the realization of character education in the schools. Intensifying the meetings among teachers in school service meetings. The principal orders the teachers to plan and implement the integration of specific character values in the learning process, and the principal creates an intensive policy to carry out certain activities that support the culture and inculcation of character in the school environment (Widodo, 2018). In this case, the teacher actively teaches the students about the importance of values, norms, and habits of praiseworthy character, which becomes the priority of the school by integrating them into each subject (Rudolf, 2019).

### Reinforcing a character

Reinforcement is any form of response that includes verbal or nonverbal as feedback towards student behavior (Usman, 2010). Similarly stated by Hasibuan (2008), providing reinforcement is defined as behavior in responding to student's certain behaviors positively that enable the behavior to reappear, also intended to reward or encourage the students, therefore, they more actively participate in interactions of teaching and learning.

In order for the acculturation of the character can develop and run effectively, it must be supported by consistent reinforcement. The consistent reinforcement is carried out by continuous communication related to values, norms, habits that have become a priority by always providing opportunities for students to apply these values. Strengthening the acculturation of good character in the schools can be done in several ways. The policy regarding school rules and regulations is the primary reference in the acculturation of character in the schools. Another reinforcement can be formed with habits programmed by the school. Strengthening acculturation of the character also can be visualized or installed with pamphlets contained by values, norms, and character habits, wall magazines, and by giving awards to the teachers, employees, and students who show the achievements related to priority character values. No less important is to support the cultivation of good character by the physical arrangement of the school environment. (Rudolf, 2019: 92-93).

## Methods

### 7 Type of Research

Qualitative research is a study aimed at describing and analyzing phenomena, events, social activities, attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, thoughts of individuals individually or in groups (Sukmadinata, 2010). Thus, descriptive qualitative research emphasizes the actual situation and tries to uncover the phenomena that exist in that situation. This type of research produces descriptive data in the form of written and speech as well as observed behavior (Moleong, 2004). This study aimed to collect a variety of factual information comprehensively about the principal's strategy in instilling the religious character of students in the Muhammadiyah Elementary School of Al Mujahidin, Wonosari, then it examines and looks for the answers toward existing problems.

### Participants

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The research participants in this study were the principal, teachers, employees, and students. The technique of taking research participants is purposive sampling, namely the technique of taking data sources with certain considerations.

**Table 1. Description of Research Participants**

No.	Initial Name	Gender	Position
1.	AD	Male	Headmaster
2.	AN	Female	Teacher of ISMUBA
3.	TPR	Female	Head of Administration
4.	LW	Female	Homeroom Teacher
5.	20 L	Male	Homeroom Teacher
6.	Student 1	Female	Student
7.	Student 2	Female	Student
8.	Student 3	Male	Student

### Technique Data Collection and Analysis

Research data were collected through three techniques, namely 25 Semi-structured interviews, non-participant observation, and documentation Interviews are conducted to principals, teachers, employees, and students. In conducting the interviews, the researcher was guided by interview guidelines prepared before. The observation was conducted by observing a variety of activities in school, especially related to the role of a school principal in shaping students' character, for example, in the morning meeting, the implementation of supervision, the ceremony, and the implementation of worship activities in the mosque. The observation type that was conducted is participant research since the researcher was also directly involved in various activities held at the school. In conducting the observation, the researcher also was guided by observation guidelines prepared before, in order to the data obtained was appropriate with the needs. Observation results were documented by a camera. The documentation was conducted by collecting the documents belonging to the school that is relevant to the need for research data, including school profile, school vision and mission, curriculum, and a list of activities related to the instilling of religious characters in schools. Data collected was analyzed by using Inductive interactive data analysis models of Miles and Huberman (1994) consisted of data reduction, data display, and conclusion. The stage of data reduction included sorting and data selection that is appropriate for research purposes. The irrelevant data were reduced, and relevant data were grouped appropriately with a specific category. In this research, the researcher found four themes about the role of the school principal as a role model, habituation, integration in the class learning, and reinforcement. In the data presentation, Interview excerpts are included as evidence of each displayed theme (Fine et al., 2000; Simons, 2009). In the final stage, the withdrawal of conclusions and verifications was conducted by means of researchers concluded at the end of the theme under the evidence obtained through interviews, observations, or found documents.

## Findings

The presentation of the data of this research was carried out by the themes found during data collection and analysis during research. Data about the principal's strategy in instilling religious character in Muhammadiyah Al Mujahidin Wonosari Elementary School can be grouped into four themes, namely example, habit formation, integration in teaching, and reinforcement.

### Providing an Example

To realize the religious character in the school, the principal gives a good example to all of the school members. Based on observations and interviews, the principal gives an example through direct actions that are reflected in daily activities, furthermore, it can be an example for all of the school members.

19 Based on the results of the interview, AN said that the principal gave an example by conducting activities at school and could be emulated by all of the school members. The real example is time discipline. The principal never arrived late for coming to school. The principal becomes a role model of time discipline for teachers, employees, and all of the students in the school.

The way of the headmaster gives an example by giving a direct example, the principal was rarely late for coming to school. He always arrived on time before 6.50. This was done, according to the pro tap, that all of the teachers, employees, and students must be present at the school at 06.50 (Interview with AN, May 10, 2019).

The interview results showed that the principal provides exemplary behavior to all of the school members by coming on time. Exemplary action is routinely done by the principal every day. An example by the principal emphasizes behavioral aspects in shaping concrete actions. The same thing was pronounced by LN in an interview:

The headmaster was a disciplined figure. His discipline was shown in his daily activities at school. For example, he often monitored the teachers by entering classes at 6:00 a.m. to 7:05 a.m. He monitored class-to-class and ensures that activities were running. So, we also followed his discipline by always trying to be on time in carrying out all activities at school. (Interview, June 20, 2019).

Not only coming to school or ensuring the morning *Tahsin* activities running as the schedule but providing a model by coming on time to the school is also implemented by the school principal during Worship. This is consistent with the results of the interview with AN:

"The headmaster gave an example directly in terms of orderly Worship. During the first recess, he usually prays Duha in the Musholla with the students and other teachers. This was done because the school made a program to orderly carry out the Sunnah Dhuha prayer. In order to run this program consistently, the headmaster, as the leader of this school, made himself as a good example for all school members. (Interview, May 10, 2019).

The same statement also stated by LN:

"The school principal made a school program was not only for teachers or students. He also implemented what he had been programmed and agreed with. For instance, when the rest was coming first, if we, teacher and employees, also students, were asked for praying Dhuha, he also was doing the same thing. Based on my opinion, by doing the same activities that had been ordered by himself, at the same time, the principal could monitor the activities on the school program. When the time to pray was coming, he also did the same thing, he directly came to Musholla (Small Mosque) and was doing a prayer together with the students." (Interviews, June 20, 2019)

According to the results of interviews with various sources, it can be concluded that the principal can provide an example in terms of orderly Worship.

### Forming a Habit

Forming a habit is an action that is deliberately carried out repeatedly and continuously so that it can become a habit. The habit is based on accustomed experiences. Habituated behavior aims to teach students to get used to commendable behavior. The application of habit carried out by the principal in the form of routine activities and appeals. Routine activities are activities carried out by students continuously and consistently. Routine activities that are used by principals to instil religious character in students include memorizing (*Murajaah*) short letters of Al-Qur'an, Tahfidz or memorize (*Murajaah*) juz 29 and or juz 30, Tahsinul Qur'an, Dhuha Sunnah Prayers, Dhuhr prayer in congregation and cult, and also religious Literacy.



Forming habit aims to shape religious character while meeting school curriculum targets. As interview results delivered by AN:

There are many habits in this which support the religious character. This habit has been programmed starting from the morning, start from the students going to school until school finished, we always emphasize the habit. Starting from half-past seven in the morning, the students already picket for morning memorizing, their activities were reading short letters of Al-Qur'an that are connected to speakers so that all of the school members could hear it (Interview, May 10, 2019).

Some of the habits of a religious character in Al Mujahidin Muhammadiyah Elementary School were also outlined in several instruments, including the PIATA Worship Book, the Golden Habits Book and the PHBSIM Book (Clean, Healthy, Islamic, and Independent Life Behavior). The PIATA worship book is a book compiled by schools to help the students and the guardians of the students in the aspects of praying at five times a day, recitation, and study both inside and outside class hours.

PIATA book of Worship was being made by parents to monitor the children's worship aspects while training honesty, especially in the process of filling. The assessment results are then reported to the student guardian at the PIATA meeting conducted each semester twice. The agenda used by the school to communicate with the student's guardian related to student achievement. The school principal stated that:

"we made PIATA book Instrument (Pantauan Ibu dan Ayah Terhadap Anak)/(Mother and Father monitoring of the children) except to improve religiosity, especially mandatory aspect of Worship, namely five-time prayers, also used to practice the honesty. This instrument also used to help the parents to control the child's prayer. The monitoring results we further reported to the student's guardian in routine meetings twice every semester." (Interview, July 30, 2019)

Except for PIATA book, The book of Golden Habits is an instrument book that contains observations of the activities of the Sunnah and is compulsory for special students in grade 6. The PHBSIM book is an instrument used to practice clean, healthy, Islamic, and independent living behaviors that each grade level has specific characteristics. This book contains the daily behaviors of students, which should be done, starting from waking up to going back to sleep every day.

### **Integrated with Teaching in class**

The integration of religious characters is carried out by the principal by asking the teacher to plan and implement the integration of religious character values in the learning process. This is consistent with the results of interviews conducted with LN:

We always included the religious character in learning because it has become a collective agreement. Starting from the planning, in making lesson plans, we must always slip religious character. The headmaster also always emphasized to us that in every learning activity, we must always tuck the religious character. For example, praying before and after the activity, telling an inspiring story from the story of the prophet and apostles and the story of a friend of the apostle. " (Interview, June 20, 2019).

This statement also supported by AL that stated:

"in the learning planning, we asked for to enclose religiosity character and also in implementation. For instance, linking the knowledge with the meaning of Al-Qur'an or conveying Hadith (Prophet's tradition) through a message when the study was occurring if there were a student who misbehaved. The meaning of misbehavior was, for instance, mocking each other." (Interview, June 20, 2019)

In addition, the principal also applies a teaching strategy that is carried out by providing a clear understanding of what is goodness, justice, and values to bring out a good understanding. In terms of teaching, the principal conducts motivation, communicates with school staff regularly and continuously about the realization of character education in the schools. In addition, the headmaster also intensified meetings with the teachers at the school service meeting as a form of communication.

Based on the results of the interviews with the AD, as the principal, obtained the following results:

"I always invited teachers and employees to meet together. I conducted this meeting to unite perceptions and determine the direction of school policy. Besides discussing the school program, I also always monitored the development of students in their religious aspects. For example, the progress of child worship through the PIATA book. I ask for reports from each homeroom teacher regarding memorization progress, study, prayer, behavior, and findings in the class that must be followed up immediately. When problems were found in class, then we discussed problem solving. When it comes to communication with students, I usually said it through speeches or friends who represent through the mandate of the ceremony. We always inserted religious characters in each of these speeches." (Interview, July 30, 2019).

From the interview results, it can be seen that the principal asks the teacher to plan and carry out the integration of religious character values in the plans and learning process in the classroom. It aims to instill the religious character of students to continue through the process of teaching and learning activities.

### Strengthening Strategy (Reinforcement)

Strengthening strategy used as an appreciation toward behavior that has formed into students. Strengthening is done by giving rewards and punishment to the students. Strengthening the character at Al-Mujahidin Muhammadiyah Elementary School is done by giving rewards and punishment that can educate the students. This is consistent with the results of interviews conducted by LN:

To strengthen the character of our students, we gave them an award and punishment. The awards that we gave to them were stars, *Shahadah* student of the week, and Al-Mujahidin Elementary School Award. For instance, in a week, if the students were diligently praying, on Monday, when the teacher evaluates PIATA, the students were given a star as their achievement. For punishment, we did it by using a positive language, it meant that what we said does not cause a negative portrayal for the students, because we are launching a fun school movement. (Interview, June 20, 2019)

The examples of reinforcement that are used are by making starboard of achievement, as shown in Figure 1, this becomes an appreciation of good behavior that has been done by the students.

NO.	NAMA	BINTANG
1	Bilu si hebat	☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
2	Milaha si baik hati	☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
3	Alex sang penyekelut	☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
4	Anas si pemberani	☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
5	Nisa si Shalihah	☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
6	Azzam si hebat	☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
7	Dilla sang Dokter	☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
8	Esa si pemberani	☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
9	Kirano si lucu buku	☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
10	Kunaya si baik baik	☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
11	Hawa si pemberani	☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
12	Khalfah si mandiri	☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
13	Putri si lucu buku	☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
14	Melaku sang Dokter	☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
15	Mazna sang hebat	☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
16	Mirza si jago buku	☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
17	Fahri si jago gambar	☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
18	Akid sang penguasa	☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
19	Hawari si pemberani	☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
20	Nayla si jago kebermanian	☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
21	Quana sang jeli	☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
22	Fadiga si pintar	☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
23	Naila si mandiri	☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
24	Aya si pintar	☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
25	Musa si marah hati	☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
26	Amran si marah sayang	☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
27	Apple si baik hati	☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
28	Varel si pemberani	☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

Figure 1. The Board of Star Award for Students

In the next Interview, Mr. AL stated the same thing as others as follows:

The prizes of reinforcement are a *Mujahidin* award, a student of the week, and displaying a photo of the achiever. For example, meanwhile, the winner of *MTQ*, *MHQ*, *CCA*, and other competitions, their photos were

displayed in the school lobby. This is intended so that other students can be motivated by the winner (Interview, June 20, 2019).

**1** From the results of interviews, it can be concluded that to reinforce the student's character can also give the students the reward and punishment.

### Discussions

This study aimed to reveal the headmaster's strategy in instilling religious character in Al-Mujahidin Muhammadiyah Elementary School, Wonosari. The results of data analysis showed that there were four principal strategies, namely; modeling, habit formation, integration in teaching, and character reinforcement.

The exemplary strategy of the principal in instilling students' religious character is by directly providing good examples to the school residents. The principal's concrete actions made the school community aware of activities that could foster religiosity. In addition, providing direct exemplary action, the principal also invites and encourages the teachers and employees to become character models for the students so that the inculcation of religious characters in students is more effective. Aside from the direct activities shown at the school, the principal also provides exemplary activities outside his assignment as the principal. The positive activities that support the formation of a religious character in the schools that are guided are, for example, by becoming a Hajj guide, a speaker in Islamic teaching, and prayer leaders in several mosques around the house. The two models exemplified by the principal of Al-Mujahidin Elementary School are in line with the results of Taklimudin's research (2018), which states that exemplary action can be done either directly or indirectly. In supporting the success of students in absorbing religious character, the example from the adults is needed. The discrepancies between words and actions of adults, which educators cannot be role models will make it difficult for students to receive messages and lessons about religious characters (Suyatno, 2019a) because elementary school students are more receptive to what they see (examples) than what they hear (advice). The abovementioned findings are also in line with the results of research by Ulavere and Veisson (2015) and also Amani (2013), who have shown similar facts that the role of educators, in this context the principal, is an important role model in supporting the success of character education.

The second finding, the strategy of a habit of school principals in inculcating religious character of students is carried out by compiling routine and incidental school programs and compiling habituation instruments in the form of PIATA, PHBSIM, and Golden Habits books. With the preparation of school programs and instruments of habit, the inculcation of religious character achieves maximum results. Habit values and role model values become the most dominant strategy used by principals and teachers to foster religious character. This fact supports the theory of Mulyasa's statement (2003), which he states that habit of characters can be carried out programmatically and also habituated activities that are not programmed either through routine and spontaneous activities. Madjid and Andayani (2012) stated that a habit is an important tool for students because, with a habit, students' knowledge about goodness can be realized into a character that is accustomed to doing in everyday life. Without habit, the students will experience difficulty doing good deeds even though at the cognitive level, they already know what is best. With habits, the students not only know the importance of religious character, but students will also get used to living based on religious values (Sutrop, et al. 2013).

The next strategy, namely integration strategy into teaching activities is carried out by ensuring all of the teachers to plan and implement the integration of religious character values in the learning process to instill students' religious character continuously through the process of teaching and learning activities. The whole teachers are required to integrate religious characters through the subjects they teach (Koesoema, 2010). Whatever the subject, the teacher is required to contribute to forming students' religious character. This is done by including the religious character in the learning implementation plan, and also implementing religious character in the entire learning sequences such as in the initial learning activities, core activities, and final learning activities. This fact shows that the principal demands all of the teachers to be responsible for developing students' religious character and not only imposes to Islamic education teachers. This finding is in line with the results of previous studies which state that character education must be instilled by all of the subject teachers (Krull, 2000; Novianti, 2017). The responsibility to instill character must not only be borne by certain subjects but must be spread across all of the subjects (Sutiyono, 2013).

The fourth strategy, strengthening the principal character (reinforcing) in instilling religious character, is done by giving rewards and punishments to students. An appreciation is used as a character reinforcement because giving a

gift will be able to arouse and maintain student motivation and can control or change bad attitudes into good attitudes. To support this strategy, the school gave awards that were packaged in the Al Mujahidin Elementary School Award along with the *Tahfidzul Qur'an* graduation. This activity is an annual activity carried out by the school to appreciate students who have completed memorizing Juz 29 and 30 as well as teachers and employees who have the best performance. Usman (2010) states that reinforcement is all of the forms of responses, both verbal and nonverbal, which aims to strengthen student behavior. As conveyed by Hasibuan (2008), by giving reinforcement in the form of rewards, students will be interested in repeating the good behavior later, and vice versa, by giving punishment, students do not tend to repeat the bad behavior.

### Conclusion

According to the research, it is found four strategies of the school principal in instilling a student's religious character; through strategy, role model, habit formation, integration in-class learning, and reinforcement. Through these four strategies were undertaken by the school principal, Al-Mujahidin elementary school of Wonosari become a school that emphasizes on the formation of religious characters. The example given by the school principal was giving through various aspects, directly or indirectly. Habit formation of the activities can form religious character through the school's routine activities. The integration in learning carried out by way of the headmaster requires all of the teachers to include religious characters in the planning, implementation, and learning assessment. The reinforcement was carried out by way of giving the reward and punishment to the students according to the rules that had been agreed together.

### Limitation of The Research and Recommendation for Further Research

This research was conducted in an elementary school located in Gunungkidul region of Yogyakarta, also involved one of private elementary school. Geographically, this school located in the rural area (about 60 km from Yogyakarta city) so that it can not demographically represent the elementary school in the urban area where is the school residents have different social conditions. Furthermore, the researcher recommends that future research can research with similar topics, however, have a profound scope of participants, including the elementary school located both in the rural and urban area, also both state and private elementary school.

1

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