

Implementing School Religious Culture Program to Develop Early Childhood's Noble Character at TKN

Pembina Wlingi

Tri Hidayati¹, Ahmad Samawi², Ahmad Yusuf Sobri³

^{1,2,3}Universitas Negeri Malang, Malang, Indonesia

e-mail: *¹tri.hidayati.2401548@students.um.ac.id,

²ahmad.samawi.fip@um.ac.id, ³ahmad.yusuf.fip@um.ac.id

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received: December 29, 2025

Accepted: January 16, 2026

Available online on:

January 20, 2026

Keywords:

Early childhood; School

Religious Culture Program;

Noble Character

Copyright ©2026 by Authors.

Published by Universitas

Muhammadiyah Tangerang

ABSTRACT

This research addresses the critical need to implement the School Religious Culture program during early childhood to cultivate noble character through daily activities. The study utilized a qualitative approach at TKN Pembina Wlingi through interviews, observation, and documentation, focusing on: (1) program implementation, (2) supporting and inhibiting factors, and (3) strategies for factor management. The findings confirm that the School Religious Culture program successfully develops the noble character of early childhood children, producing individuals who are more positive, religious, and morally upright. This success is strongly supported by the principal, teachers, educational staff, and parents, who continuously strive to instill religious character through consistent, non-pressurized daily habituation.

Introduction

Education is an essential national necessity, serving a crucial

function in creating and improving the quality of Human Resources (HR) equipped with noble character. Juridically, Indonesian Law No. 20 of 2003 defines Education as a conscious and planned effort to create a learning atmosphere that actively develops the self-potential of students, encompassing spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and skills.

However, this ideal objective faces significant obstacles, namely the decline in moral values among students—even from an early age—largely triggered by technological advancements and uncontrolled media exposure. Addressing this challenge, the development and formation of noble character must be initiated during early childhood (the golden age), when children are highly receptive to environmental stimuli. Therefore, Early Childhood Education (ECE) carries a dual task: not only preparing cognitive aspects but also instilling goodness, positive character, and moral values sourced from religious teachings and social morality.

The implementation of character values, which involves knowledge, willingness, and real action (Nitami Br Ginting & Munisa, 2025), is achieved through a systematic approach based on a School Religious Culture Program. This program aims to create an educational environment focused on habituating religious values in daily routines (Purwaningsih & Syamsudin, 2022). These values are detailed across four main dimensions of practice: relationship with Allah SWT (God), self, others, and the environment. Good character application is

routinely realized through habitual activities. The goal is to produce graduates who excel in Science and Technology (IPTEK) and possess akhlakul karimah (praiseworthy behavior), including fundamental traits like honesty, trustworthiness, humility, patience, and responsibility.

In general, schools bear a crucial role in shaping a child's personality and morals through the instillation of religious values. Character education must be implemented from an early age so that children become the next generation with noble character. Achieving this requires an integrated educational process that combines the roles of the school, family, and social environment. This synergy is vital for strengthening the child's character education, increasing family involvement, and building close cooperation that ultimately realizes a safe, comfortable, and pleasant learning environment.

TKN Pembina Wlingi, uses the School Religious Culture Program as its core learning strategy. This program aims to foster good habits, enhance children's understanding of religious values, and develop their moral character early on. The program integrates various routine religious activities, including the 5S greeting, praying together, giving infaq (alms), performing Duha prayer, and practicing integrated worship (such as memorizing short surahs, understanding the Pillars of Islam/Faith, and practical prayer/ablution). The school also conducts annual or incidental religious events (e.g., Islamic High Holiday celebrations) and provides adequate religious facilities and equipment.

Several previous studies are relevant to the research entitled “Implementing School Religious Culture Program to Develop Early Childhood’s Noble Character at TKN Pembina Wlingi”, particularly those that discuss the implementation of religious values, religious culture, and character development in early childhood education settings.

First, the study conducted by Margaretha and Haryono (2024) examined the implementation of moral and religious values in early childhood education using a qualitative descriptive approach at KB Gemilang Bengkulu City. The research involved educators and education personnel, with data collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. The findings revealed that the integration of moral and religious values was carried out through daily habituation activities lasting 15–20 minutes before formal learning began. The activities included storytelling, singing, role play, lectures, and modeling, with materials focused on introducing religious concepts such as the recognition of God. The study concluded that routine religious and moral habituation effectively fosters moral and religious values in early childhood. This research is relevant because it emphasizes habituation as a strategic method for embedding religious values, which aligns with the concept of school religious culture programs aimed at shaping noble character.

Second, research by Pamuji et al. (2024) investigated the implementation of religious culture to develop children’s character in

early childhood education institutions in Banyumas, Indonesia, using a qualitative descriptive case study design. Data were collected through interviews, observation, and documentation, and analyzed through data reduction, data presentation, verification, and conclusion drawing. The findings showed that the implementation of religious culture consists of two major components: the phasing pattern of cultivating religious values and the forms of religious culture practiced in schools. The cultivation process begins with introduction and training, followed by habituation. Meanwhile, religious culture is manifested through activities related to holy books, religious rituals, and places of worship, transmitted through both learning and non-learning activities, including role modeling, socialization, and parent-school communication. This study strongly supports the present research because it highlights structured religious culture as a systematic approach to character formation in early childhood.

Third, Fahmi et al. (2024) explored the transformation of student character through a religious-based Child-Friendly School Program (SRA) at MTs Almaarif 01 Singosari using a qualitative case study methodology. Data were obtained from observations, interviews, and document analysis involving school administrators, teachers, students, parents, and school committees. The findings indicated that the integration of religious values, positive discipline policies, and active stakeholder involvement significantly contributed to students' character development, particularly in discipline, responsibility, and

respect for religious values. Although conducted at the secondary level, this study provides important insights into how a religious-based school program creates a supportive environment for holistic character education. The relevance to the present study lies in the emphasis on institutional culture and collaborative stakeholder involvement in strengthening character education through religious values.

Fourth, the study by Isnaningsih and Rohman (2020) examined the role of religious activities in instilling the character of responsibility in early childhood at TK ABA Bantul, Yogyakarta, using a qualitative phenomenological approach. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. The results demonstrated that responsibility character was developed through habituation in religious activities such as prayer, reciting supplications, obeying school rules, maintaining cleanliness, completing assigned tasks, and respecting diversity. The study also highlighted the role of educators as role models, advisors, and supervisors in shaping children's moral attitudes and behaviors. This research is closely related to the present study because it confirms that consistent religious activities embedded in daily school routines can cultivate responsible and moral character in early childhood.

Based on these previous studies, it can be concluded that the implementation of religious values, religious culture, and religious-based school programs plays a significant role in developing children's character through habituation, role modeling, and structured

institutional culture. However, most prior research focuses on general religious activities or institutional religious culture patterns, while limited studies specifically examine the comprehensive implementation of a school religious culture program in cultivating noble character in early childhood within a public kindergarten context. Therefore, this research on the implementation of a School Religious Culture Program at TKN Pembina Wlingi offers a novel contribution by emphasizing systematic religious cultural practices as a strategic framework for developing early childhood's noble character in a formal early childhood education institution.

Based on this background, the researcher conducts this study under the title: "Implementing School Religious Culture Program to Develop Early Childhood's Noble Character at TKN Pembina Wlingi." This research aims to understand the implementation of the program, including its supporting and inhibiting factors, at TKN Pembina Wlingi, Blitar.

Methods

This research employs a qualitative approach (Hollstein, 2011). Through this approach, the researcher can directly observe how religious values are habituated, how teachers act as role models, and how the religious atmosphere is consistently built into children's daily activities (Susanti et al., 2025). Furthermore, this approach allows the researcher to capture the responses, perceptions, and interpretations of the teachers and children regarding the program implemented. The

location of this research is at TK Negeri Pembina Wlingi, Blitar Regency, East Java Province. The data sources for this study consist of human sources (interviews and observation) and non-human sources (documentation). The data collection techniques used are interviews, observation, and documentation. The interview process was conducted with teachers and parents of the children at TKN Pembina Wlingi, as well as the PAI PAUD supervisor.

Result and Discussions

The School Religious Culture Program (SRC) is considered crucial for implementation from an early age because early childhood is in the golden age phase—a single crucial period marked by rapid brain and physical development—which determines the quality of future human resources (Trenggonowati & Kulsum, 2018). The instillation of religious values as early as possible serves as a moral foundation for the child. The main goal of education is to ensure a positive impact on character (*akhlak*), requiring the internalization of moral conduct (*budi pekerti*) from an early age, starting with the family. Effective moral education necessitates synergy between parents and educators to produce a well-behaved generation, ensuring happiness in this world and the hereafter (Herawati, 2017).

The SRC at TK Negeri Pembina Wlingi instills values aligned with the Kemendiknas formulation (2010)—such as religiousness, honesty, tolerance, and responsibility—through modeling, practice, and daily habituation. This method is consistent with character education

guidelines (Rosdiana, 2015). Religious activities in the school (greetings, Duha prayer, Qur'an memorization, etc.) align with early childhood character development strategies (Rohmah, 2018). Consequently, children exhibit positive changes (becoming diligent in recitation, routinely praying), indicating successful character development (Rohmah, 2018). Sound religious knowledge builds strong faith, leading children to view cheating as negative (Teo et al., 2024), thus making them more disciplined and less likely to engage in misconduct.

Teachers play a significant role by utilizing play activities as a medium to teach cooperation and moral values (Rizal et al., 2025), helping children practice character directly (Jadidah et al., 2025). They also facilitate learning through morally-themed stories and structured discussions that aid critical thinking (Munawir et al., 2022). Furthermore, daily school activities (such as memorizing prayers and Duha prayer) develop character through observation and imitation (modeling), as a consistent school environment serves as a good religious model (Oktaviana et al., 2022).

Character implementation requires coordination and cooperation among the family, school, and community (Bayhaqi et al., 2020). Teachers and family have an important role to shape moral value in early childhood education (Perwitasari et al., 2025). The family, as the first school, must support the SRC by replicating school habits at home, as character formation heavily relies on the method of habituation and repetition (Anisyah et al., 2023). Parents must also be role models

aligned with school teachings, as contradictory behavior can negate character instillation efforts (Novianti Yusuf & Nurul Qomariah, 2023) (Arifudin, 2022).

The availability of adequate religious facilities and infrastructure (clean prayer rooms, Islamic posters) indirectly strengthens the religious culture message (Alkafi et al., 2023). The main obstacle is lack of full parental awareness and support, causing misalignment between school and home practices (Purwaningsih & Syamsudin, 2022). Another challenge is the absence of a dedicated SRC curriculum (Soleha, 2019).

To address obstacles and enhance competency, the school regularly conducts training for teachers (Indria Persada et al., 2025). Additionally, the school organizes parenting sharing sessions with experts. This activity benefits parents by increasing knowledge, strengthens cooperation between teachers and parents, and serves as an effective communication platform to align parenting patterns and convey aspirations (Novianti Yusuf & Nurul Qomariah, 2023). Parents expressed hope that the school would monitor children's progress through this communication forum.

Conclusion

The School Religious Culture Program (SRC) at TK Negeri Pembina Wlingi successfully built the noble character of early childhood children. This success is evidenced through interviews and observations, showing that the children became more positive and actively followed school habituations. The success of the SRC is strongly supported by the

principal, teachers, educational staff, and parents. Teachers strive to instill religious character through daily habituation so that children do not feel pressured, while simultaneously acting as positive role models. Parents also play a crucial role by replicating the school's habituations at home, supported by the adequate religious facilities and infrastructure provided by the school. Future researchers are advised to conduct a comparative study between public, private, or religious-based institutions to identify the most influential success and inhibiting factors.

References

- Alkafi, Z., Nasrulloh, M. E., & Sulyandri, A. K. (2023). Implementasi Pendidikan Karakter Berbasis Budaya Sekolah di SMP Raudlatul Ulum 2 Putukrejo. *VICRATINA: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 8(5), 334–346. <http://riset.unisma.ac.id/index.php/fai/index>
- Anisyah, N., Marwah, S., & Yumarni, V. (2023). Pendidikan Karakter dalam Pembentukan Akhlak Anak Pra Sekolah. *Murhum: Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*, 4(1), 287–295. <https://doi.org/10.37985/murhum.v4i1.164>
- Arifudin, O. (2022). *Perkembangan Peserta Didik (Tinjauan Teori-teori dan Praktis)* (Ulfah, Ed.). Widina Bhakti Persada Bandung. www.penerbitwidina.com
- Bayhaqi, A. M., Ramadhan, A. A., Rohman, F., & Ag, M. (2020). Pendidikan Karakter Anak Usia Dini untuk Membentuk Akhlak Mahmudah. *RISDA: Jurnal Pemikiran Dan Pendidikan Islam*, 4(2). <https://ejournal.staiarrosyid.ac.id/index.php/risda/index>
- Fahmi, F., Rofiq, A., & Zuhriyah, I. A. (2024). Transformation of student character building through religious-based child-friendly school programs: Responding to challenges and creating sustainable character education solutions. *Educazione: Journal of Education and Learning*, 2(1), 52-65. <https://doi.org/10.61987/educazione.v2i1.551>
- Herawati. (2017). Pendidikan Akhlak bagi Anak Usia Dini. *Bunayya: Jurnal Pendidikan Anak*, VIII, 124–136.

- Hollstein, B. (2011). Qualitative approaches. *The SAGE handbook of social network analysis*, 1(01), 404-416.
- Indria Persada, Y., Mellyaning Khoiriya, R., & Wibowo, A. (2025). Meningkatkan Kompetensi Guru melalui Workshop Pemanfaatan Kecerdasan Artifisial di Sekolah Dasar secara Bertanggung Jawab Kata kunci. *Abdimas Pedagogi: Jurnal Ilmiah Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat*, 8(1), 18–23. <https://doi.org/um050v8i12025p18-23>
- Jadidah, N., Hidayah, R., Fadilah, N., & Mukhlis. (2025). Peran Guru dalam Membentuk Karakter Anak Usia Dini. *Ta'rim: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Anak Usia Dini Volume*, 6(1), 2025. <https://doi.org/10.59059/tarim.v6i1>
- Kemendiknas. (2010). *Pendidikan Karakter di Sekolah Menengah Pertama Panduan*. Kementerian Pendidikan Nasional.
- Margaretha, L., & Haryono, M. (2024). Implementation of Moral and Religious Values in Early Childhood. *Journal of Early Childhood Development and Education*, 1(1), 23–29. <https://doi.org/10.58723/junior.v1i1.109>
- Munawir, M., Salsabila, Z. P., & Nisa', N. R. (2022). Tugas, Fungsi dan Peran Guru Profesional. *Jurnal Ilmiah Profesi Pendidikan*, 7(1), 8–12. <https://doi.org/10.29303/jipp.v7i1.327>
- Nitami Br Ginting, D., & Munisa. (2025). Punishment in Islamic Early Childhood Education: Harmonizing Islamic Principles and Educational Theories. *Ceria: Jurnal Program Studi Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*, 14(2), 222–233. <https://doi.org/10.31000/ceria.v14i2.13755>
- Novianti Yusuf, R., & Nurul Qomariah, D. (2023). Kontekstualisasi Keterlibatan Orang Tua melalui Sharing Session pada Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini. *JiIP: Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Pendidikan*, 6, 10584–10596. <https://doi.org/10.54371/jiip.v6i12.3274>
- Oktaviana, A., Marhumah, M., Munastiwi, E., & Na'imah, N. (2022). Peran Pendidik dalam Menerapkan Pendidikan Akhlak Anak Usia Dini melalui Metode Pembiasaan. *Jurnal Obsesi: Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*, 6(5), 5297–5306. <https://doi.org/10.31004/obsesi.v6i5.2715>
- Pamuji, Z., Roqib, M., Basit, A., & Yahya, M. S. (2024). Implementation of Religious Culture to Develop Children's Character in Early

- Childhood Education . *JPUD - Jurnal Pendidikan Usia Dini*, 18(1), 81–98. <https://doi.org/10.21009/JPUD.181.06>
- Perwitasari, N. A., Syarafina, N. A., Qurratu'ain, N., Putri, A., & Rasi'in. (2025). The Importance of the Role of Parents and Teachers as Moral Role Models in Early Childhood Education. *Ceria: Jurnal Program Studi Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*, 14(3), 796–811. <https://doi.org/10.31000/ceria.v14i3.14211>
- Purwaningsih, C., & Syamsudin, A. (2022). Pengaruh Perhatian Orang tua, Budaya Sekolah, dan Teman Sebaya Terhadap Karakter Religius Anak. *Jurnal Obsesi : Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*, 6(4), 2439–2452. <https://doi.org/10.31004/obsesi.v6i4.2051>
- Rizal, A. F., Widiatsih, A., & Wijaya, P. R. (2025). Character Education Management Through the Little Police Officer (Pocil) Program at TK Kemala Bhayangkari 31 Tanggul. *Ceria: Jurnal Program Studi Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*, 14(2), 373–381. <https://doi.org/10.31000/ceria.v14i2.14263>
- Rohmah, U. (2018). Pengembangan Karakter Pada Anak Usia Dini (AUD). *AL-ATHFAL : JURNAL PENDIDIKAN ANAK*, 4(1), 85–102. <https://doi.org/10.14421/al-athfal.2018.41-06>
- Rosdiana. (2015). *Membangun Karakter Mulia pada Anak: Pertimbangan Pengenalan Hukum Islam Semenjak Dini*. <https://doi.org/10.24260/raheema.v2i2.533>
- Susanti, Y. P., Rambe, K. F., Rahmi, E., & Hilmi, H. (2025). Parental Role Modeling in Shaping Children's Religious Character: A Qualitative Study on Religious Education Practices in the Family Environment. *Al-kayyis: Journal of Islamic Education*, 3(2), 89-96. <https://ojs.stai-bls.ac.id/index.php/ajie/article/view/274>
- Soleha, S. (2019). Pengembangan Kurikulum Pendidikan Agama Dalam Menciptakan Sikap Toleransi Beragama di Madrasah Aliyah dan Sekolah Menengah Atas Kabupaten Bangka. *Scientia: Jurnal Hasil Penelitian*, 4(2), 148–180. <https://doi.org/10.32923/sci.v4i2.1132>
- Teo, T., Huang, F., Hue, M. T., & Cheung, H. Y. (2024). The influence of religious beliefs on bullying and cheating among secondary school students in Hong Kong. *Acta Psychologica*, 251. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.actpsy.2024.104563>

Ceria: Journal of the Childhood Education Study Program, 15(1), pages 632-645. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.31000/ceria.v15i1.15537>

Trenggonowati, D. L., & Kulsum. (2018). Analisis Faktor Optimalisasi Golden Age Anak Usia Dini Studi Kasus di Kota Cilegon. *Journal Industrial Servicess*, 4(1). <https://doi.org/10.36055/jiss.v4i1.4088>