
Strategy and Implementation of Integrating Character Education in Organizational Activities at Muhammadiyah Cipanas Senior High School

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Abstract: Responding to the problem of the character education process has not been maximized, as well as to face the challenges of rapid technological advancement that has given birth to globalization and socio-cultural shifts, Islamic programs are expected to have a positive impact on character education, while the Muhammadiyah Student Association is an organization in which it has an Islamic program. This study aims to describe the implementation of character education in the Islamic program of the Muhammadiyah Student Association Branch of Muhammadiyah Cipanas Senior High School, the inhibiting factors, and also the solutions to overcome them. This research uses a qualitative approach, with data collection methods in the form of in-depth observations, interviews, and documentation. The data analysis techniques in this study go through the stages of data reduction, data display, data verification, and conclusion. The results of this study show that the implementation of character education in the Islamic program of the Muhammadiyah Student Association Branch of Muhammadiyah Cipanas High School includes introductory activities such as FORTASI activities, training activities such as PKDTM 1, and routine activities or habituation such as tadarus. The factors that hinder the implementation of character education in the Islamic program of the Muhammadiyah Student Association Branch of Muhammadiyah Cipanas Senior High School are: 1) Focus on Academic Achievement, 2) Lack of Interesting Religious Learning, 3) Popular Culture Influence, 4) Lack of Model Role, 5) Technological Development, 6) Lack of Parental Participation, and 7) Free Association. The solutions are: 1) Integration of Islamic Values in All Subjects, 2) Development of a Creative Religious Curriculum, 3) Improvement of the Quality of Teachers on Religion, 4) Cooperation with Parents, 5) Utilization of Technology, 6) Formation of Communities/Study Groups, 7) Interesting Religious Activities, and 8) Continuous Evaluation.

Keywords: organizational activities, integration strategy, Islamic values, character education, sma muhammadiyah cipanas.

INTRODUCTION

Character education plays a vital role in shaping individuals who are not only academically competent but also morally and ethically grounded. In the context of Muhammadiyah Cipanas Senior High School, character education is deeply rooted in Islamic values and serves as a foundation for fostering student leadership and community engagement. As a leading institution committed to instilling Islamic principles, Muhammadiyah Cipanas emphasizes the integration of character education within its

academic and extracurricular programs, particularly through the activities of its student organization, the Pimpinan Ranting Ikatan Pelajar Muhammadiyah (PR IPM) [1].

The challenge of integrating character education into organizational activities arises from the need to balance academic priorities, religious teachings, and the practical application of leadership and teamwork. Many student organizations struggle to maintain a focus on character development amidst the pressures of meeting programmatic goals and addressing diverse student interests. At Muhammadiyah Cipanas, the PR IPM serves as a platform for students to practice values such as discipline, responsibility, mutual respect, and honesty. However, achieving a consistent and meaningful integration of these values requires strategic planning and thoughtful implementation [1].

The significance of this theme lies in its potential to address broader societal challenges. In an era marked by moral dilemmas and the erosion of ethical standards, character education provides students with the tools to navigate complex situations and make principled decisions. By embedding character education into organizational activities, schools like Muhammadiyah Cipanas can cultivate leaders who not only excel in academics but also embody integrity and compassion. This approach aligns with the broader goals of Islamic education, which seeks to produce individuals who contribute positively to society while adhering to spiritual principles [2], [3].

Furthermore, the integration of character education into student activities supports the vision of Muhammadiyah as a movement dedicated to advancing education and social reform. The PR IPM, as an extension of this vision, offers students a structured environment to apply Islamic teachings in real-life scenarios. Activities such as community service, team-based projects, and leadership training sessions are designed to reinforce core values while promoting personal growth. These initiatives not only benefit the students but also strengthen the school's reputation as a centre of excellence in holistic education [2], [3].

The implementation of character education in organizational activities also presents opportunities for innovation and collaboration. By involving students, teachers, and community members in the planning and execution of programs, schools can create a dynamic and inclusive learning environment. For instance, mentorship programs led by alumni or collaborative projects with local organizations can enhance the impact of character-building efforts. Such strategies ensure that the values instilled during school years have a lasting influence on students' lives [2], [3].

This paper explores the strategies and implementation of integrating character education into the organizational activities of the PR IPM at Muhammadiyah Cipanas Senior High School. It examines the challenges faced by student leaders, the role of school administration in supporting these efforts, and the outcomes achieved through such initiatives. By analyzing this case study, the paper aims to provide insights and recommendations for other educational institutions seeking to adopt similar approaches [4].

The integration of character education into organizational activities is not only an educational necessity but also a societal imperative. As Muhammadiyah Cipanas continues to uphold its commitment to Islamic values and educational excellence, the experiences and lessons learned from its efforts can serve as a model for fostering moral and ethical leadership among students. This endeavour highlights the transformative power of character education in shaping future generations who are equipped to lead with wisdom, compassion, and integrity [4].

Muhammadiyah, founded by K.H. Ahmad Dahlan, has made great contributions in the fields of education, health, and social in Indonesia and abroad. As an organization that continues to grow, Muhammadiyah needs cadres to maintain the continuity of its struggle. One of the cadre forums is the Muhammadiyah Student Association (IPM), which was established on July 18, 1961, to form students with morals and integrity, referring to the teachings of the Qur'an and As-Sunnah [2], [3].

IPM has the vision to move da'wah through the concept of Amar ma'ruf nahi mungkar, with a focus on shaping the character of religious and disciplined students. However, with the influence of popular culture growing stronger among students, IPM faces challenges in maintaining Islamic values. Local culture is increasingly marginalized, and social media often exacerbates this condition [5], [6].

The author hopes that the results of this research can contribute to the IPM organization for scientific development, especially in the field of Islamic da'wah studies in charge of Islamic programs in IPM, besides that it can also provide insight and progress in the development of the amar ma'ruf nahi mungkar movement of the IPM Branch Leadership of SMA Muhammadiyah Cipanas. This research aims to: 1). Describe the implementation of character education in the Islamic work program of the IPM Branch Leadership of SMA Muhammadiyah Cipanas, 2). Describe the factors that inhibit the character education system in the Islamic work program, 3). Explain the solutions implemented to overcome the obstacles in the character education system.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Character education has long been recognized as a cornerstone of holistic learning, aimed at developing students' moral, ethical, and social competencies. In educational institutions, particularly those with religious foundations, character education is often intertwined with spiritual values. According to Lickona, character education encompasses efforts to nurture core virtues such as respect, responsibility, and honesty, which are essential for personal and social development. This aligns with the objectives of Islamic education, which seeks to produce individuals who uphold values derived from the Qur'an and Sunnah [5], [6].

Studies on character education implementation in schools highlight the significance of integrating moral values into daily activities and organizational practices. Berkowitz and Bier emphasize the role of experiential learning in character formation, where students engage in activities that require collaboration, leadership, and ethical decision-making. Similarly, Narvaez and Lapsley propose that character education is most effective when integrated into the broader school culture, encompassing both curricular and extracurricular domains.

Within the context of Muhammadiyah schools, character education is an integral component of their mission to foster "khairu ummah" (the best community). The role of student organizations, such as the Pimpinan Ranting Ikatan Pelajar Muhammadiyah (PR IPM), becomes crucial in operationalizing this vision. PR IPM serves as a platform for students to practice leadership, engage in community service, and internalize Islamic values. Studies by Muttaqin and Azizah on Muhammadiyah schools emphasize that student organizations are effective in nurturing discipline, responsibility, and a sense of belonging among members [5], [6].

Research also points to the challenges of integrating character education into student organizations. A study by Suyadi and Selasih identifies limited resources, lack of teacher supervision, and inconsistencies in program implementation as common barriers. Despite these challenges, successful integration requires strategic planning and active collaboration between school leadership and student leaders. For instance, activities such as team-based projects, mentoring, and reflective discussions have been found to enhance the internalization of character values [7].

In the context of Muhammadiyah Cipanas Senior High School, existing literature suggests that the integration of character education into PR IPM activities offers significant potential for moral and spiritual development. However, a gap remains in understanding the specific strategies and frameworks employed to achieve this integration. Exploring these strategies can provide insights into how student organizations can be leveraged as vehicles for character education.



Figure 1. SMA Muhammadiyah Cipanas

In conclusion, the literature underscores the importance of embedding character education into both curricular and extracurricular activities. By examining the implementation strategies within PR IPM at Muhammadiyah Cipanas, this study seeks to contribute to the broader discourse on effective character education in religious-based educational settings.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a post-positivist paradigm, emphasizing the principle of determinism, which posits that specific causes determine the outcomes observed in research. The post-positivist approach recognizes that while absolute objectivity may be unattainable, rigorous methodologies and careful observations can lead to credible and reliable conclusions. Within this paradigm, the primary focus is to comprehend phenomena by examining them as they occur in reality. This is achieved through systematic observation and interpretation, allowing for an in-depth understanding of the underlying factors influencing the research outcomes [\[8\]](#).

The research employs a qualitative approach, which is particularly suited for exploring complex social phenomena. Unlike quantitative methods that prioritize numerical data and statistical analysis, qualitative research seeks to delve deeply into the lived experiences of individuals. By employing a phenomenological method, this study aims to uncover the meaning behind events and experiences as perceived by the research subjects. The phenomenological approach is rooted in understanding the essence of experiences, making it an ideal choice for capturing the nuanced realities of human perceptions, emotions, and social interactions [\[9\]–\[11\]](#).

This study is categorized as descriptive research, which focuses on providing a detailed account of the phenomena under investigation. Descriptive research aims to illustrate and explain various aspects of social activities, events, and individual or group behaviour. This includes documenting attitudes, thoughts, and perceptions as they naturally occur, without attempting to manipulate or control variables. By concentrating on description, the study seeks to offer insights into the “what” and “how” of the phenomena, paving the way for a comprehensive understanding of the research context. The combination of a qualitative approach and a descriptive design ensures that this research captures the richness and complexity of the subject matter. Through in-depth observation, interviews, and analysis of contextual factors, the study explores how individuals and groups interpret their experiences. This method enables the researcher to identify patterns, themes, and meanings embedded within the participants' narratives [\[12\]](#), [\[13\]](#).

In conclusion, the use of a post-positivist paradigm, combined with qualitative and phenomenological methods, provides a robust framework for investigating the research topic. The descriptive nature of the study ensures a detailed exploration of events, attitudes, and perceptions, offering valuable insights into the phenomena under study. This methodology is

particularly effective for uncovering the depth and breadth of human experiences, making it well-suited for understanding complex social realities.

Table 1. Research Methods

Research Aspects	Description
Research Paradigm	Post Positivism: A deterministic philosophy, where causes affect the effects or results of research. Knowledge is obtained through observation of reality.
Type of Research	Descriptive: Analyzing and describing phenomena, events, attitudes, thoughts, and perceptions of individuals or communities.
Research approach	Qualitative with a phenomenological approach: understanding and interpreting the meaning of events experienced, seen, heard, or read by the researcher.
Research Methods	Inductive: researchers go directly into the field to explore existing problems and realities.
Data Source	Primary: Interviews, field observations, and documentation of Islamic activities at the IPM Branch Leader of SMA Muhammadiyah Cipanas. Secondary: Books, Articles, and Research Journals that are relevant.
Research Object	The IPM Branch Leader of SMA Muhammadiyah Cipanas who implements character education in the Islamic program.
Research Subject	General Chairman, Secretary, Head of Islamic Da'wah Studies, Head of Cadre, Member of the IPM Branch Leadership, Teacher, Head of Muhammadiyah Cipanas High School.
Data Analysis Techniques	Miles and Huberman Model: Data reduction, data display, data verification, and Conclusion.
Data Validity	Credibility: Internal validity (validity of data). Transferability: External validity (Generalization ability). Dependability: Test reliability (data consistency). Confirmability: Independent verification of the data collected.

This study aims to understand the implementation of character education in the Islamic program at the IPM Branch of SMA Muhammadiyah Cipanas through observation, interviews, and documentation of relevant activities.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Character building is a lifelong process that is influenced by the environment in which character is enacted. Family, school, and community (organization) play an important role in

character development [14]–[16]. The Muhammadiyah Student Association (IPM) of SMA Muhammadiyah Cipanas develops character education through Islamic activities, such as:

SANLAT Activities (Flash Islamic Boarding School)

The Lightning Islamic Boarding School (SANLAT) is a religious activity that is added every Ramadan to instil Islamic character in students. In 2024, SANLAT will be held on March 27-30 with the theme "Building The Best Version of Self in Ramadhan" and was attended by 160 participants. This activity aims to form students who are knowledgeable and have noble character, as well as Tough in worshipping during Ramadan [17], [18].

Key activities include:

1. On the first day, the opening, tadarus, zakat materials, and Muhammadiyah, as well as congregational prayers.
2. Day two, shalat dhuha, tadarus, motivasi ibadah, dzikir, materi Tahsin Al-Qur'an, hafalan.
3. On the third day, the dhuha prayer, tadarus, and social and reflection materials ended with memorization.
4. On the fourth day, the activity started early in the afternoon with watching together, door prizes, and student performances, ending with breaking the fast together [19].

Through this activity, participants are expected to deepen their worship and strengthen their Islamic character [20], [21].



Figure 2. Activities of Muhammadiyah Cipanas High School Students

Dompot Qurban

The Dompot Qurban program is an annual activity organized by IPM SMA Muhammadiyah Cipanas to collect qurbani funds from school residents, aiming to achieve the blessing of Qurbani rewards without the need to buy sacrificial animals personally. In 2024, the funds collected amounted to Rp 8,000,000 from the contributions of 160 participants, which were used to buy a cow [22]. The activity was carried out on June 18, 2024, coinciding with Eid al-Adha, and included the slaughter of sacrificial animals and the distribution of meat to residents [23], [24].

This activity teaches the value of Qurbani worship, as well as moral values in the form of cooperation in the implementation of slaughter and social concern through the distribution of sacrificial meat [\[25\]](#), [\[26\]](#).

FORTASI (Ta'aruf Forum and Student Orientation)

FORTASI (Ta'aruf Forum and Student Orientation) is an orientation activity for new students to introduce to the school, develop their potential, and foster a sense of solidarity and social sensitivity [\[27\]](#), [\[28\]](#). This activity was held on July 13-18, 2024 with the theme Regrow the Spirit of Solidarity, Tolerance, and Cohesiveness to become a Progressive Pancasila Student [\[29\]](#), [\[30\]](#).

FORTASI activities consist of:

1. Pre-FORTASI (13 July 2024): Opening with tadarus, Indonesia Raya song, and staff introduction and jargon making.
2. Day one (July 15, 2024): Islamic material, Muhammadiyah, as well as an introduction to the school environment and the importance of maintaining cleanliness.
3. The second to third day: Material on IpM-an, Public Speaking, psychology, literacy, and worship habits (dhuha prayer, tadarus, memorization deposit).
4. Day four (July 18, 2024): Extracurricular performances, door prize distribution, and activity evaluation [\[31\]](#).

This activity aims to shape students' character through the habit of worship and understanding of Islamic values as well as the introduction of organizations. Although the time available is limited, the material provided is still fairly basic and needs improvement for more relevant and in-depth material [\[32\]](#)–[\[34\]](#).

PERAMU (Muhammadiyah People's Party)

PERAMU (Muhammadiyah People's Party) was held for 3 days, from August 12 to 14, 2024, with the theme of Welcoming Independence, Strengthening Brotherhood, Strengthening Unity, and Starting to Move to Realize the Nation's Ideals. This activity aims to foster a sense of unity, commemorate the services of heroes, increase sportsmanship, and foster a sense of pride in the homeland [\[35\]](#).

The activity began on August 12, 2024, with a flag ceremony, followed by competitions such as adhan competitions, Qur'an parties, calligraphy, tahfidz, eating crackers, romantic ball, and football [\[36\]](#). This activity contains Islamic values, such as beautifying the adhan, improving the reading and memorization of the Qur'an, and teaching good morals through entertainment competitions such as eating crackers [\[37\]](#).

The second day, August 13, 2024, was filled with poetry creation competitions, sack races, balloon glass relays, and tug-of-war, all of which aimed to provide happiness and strengthen relationships between participants. Moral values are intertwined with the happiness created [\[38\]](#).

On the third day, August 14, 2024, the activity continued with LCC competitions, fashion shows, and art performances, closing with the distribution of prizes for the winners [\[39\]](#). Overall, this activity emphasizes unity, happiness, and good morals in the interaction between participants [\[40\]](#).

PKDTM 1 (Basic Cadre Training for Melati Cadets 1)

PKDTM 1 is a formal cadre training to prepare IPM cadres who can manage organizations. This training lasted for 3 days (October 30–November 1, 2024) with the theme "Efforts to Form a Generation of Cadres with Morality, Integrity and Become Pioneers of Change for Organizational Progress". The purpose of this activity is to cadre students to

become individuals with character, strengthen the ranks of IPM da'wah, and form Muslim students who have ethics [41].

The training began with tadarus, the national anthem, and remarks, followed by materials such as ISMU (Islam and Muhammadiyah), IPM, Organization, Problem Solving, and Leadership. Daily activities include worship, such as tahajud, tadarus, and congregational prayers, as well as materials on environmental issues, administration, and trial techniques. Each session is equipped with ice-breaking to reduce boredom [42].

The second and third days were filled with more in-depth material about administration, lobbying, and simulation. This activity also involves practical exercises and post-tests. The participants were invited to maintain cleanliness, have eating manners, and improve Qur'an memorization [43].

The evaluation showed that the implementation time was quite dense, but some activities such as ice-breaking were constrained by time. Overall, the material was delivered well despite the obstacles in the implementation of time that was not according to plan [44].

The main obstacles in character education at IPM SMA Muhammadiyah Cipanas include:

1. Focus on Academic Achievement: Too much emphasis on academic achievement makes students pay less attention to religious aspects.
2. Lack of Engaging Religious Learning: Religious learning materials are often too theoretical and less relevant to students' lives.
3. Popular Culture Influence: Social media and television shows that are not by Islamic values are often a spectacle for students.
4. Lack of Role Model: Lack of role models who can be role models in practising the teachings of Islam.
5. Technological Developments: Excessive use of gadgets can reduce the time to worship and learn religion.
6. Lack of parental participation: There are still parents who do not care about the religious education of their children so they neglect and leave their children free without assistance.
7. Free Association: unrestricted association for both men and women and the free association of adolescents now both in school and outside school is one of the obstacles to the Islamic program [45].

There are several solutions that researchers can provide for these inhibiting factors:

1. Integration of Islamic Values in All Subjects: Instilling Islamic values in every learning, such as honesty, responsibility, and tolerance.
2. Creative Religious Curriculum Development: Using engaging learning methods, such as discussions, games, and case studies.
3. Improving the Quality of Teachers on Religion: Providing continuous training to improve the competence of teachers related to religion more strongly.
4. Cooperation with Parents: Hold regular meetings with parents to discuss student development and provide an understanding of the importance of religious education.
5. Utilization of Technology: Using social media and learning applications to deliver interesting religious materials.
6. Formation of Community/Study Group: Forming a religious study group in a school or mosque to facilitate discussion and sharing of experiences.

7. Interesting Religious Activities: Holding religious activities that are interesting and relevant to students' interests, such as adhan competitions, hafidz competitions, or interactive Islamic studies.
8. Continuous Evaluation: Conduct periodic evaluations to see student progress and make program improvements [46].

Examples of Activities That Can Be Done:

1. Mentoring program: Senior students become mentors for junior students in religious matters.
2. Mosque visits: Conducting visits to mosques to learn about the history and architecture of mosques [47].
3. Adolescent Islamic Studies: Conducting Islamic studies that address topics relevant to adolescent life.
4. Scientific writing competition on Islam: Stimulating students to dig deeper into the teachings of Islam [48].

Overall, PKDTM 1 succeeded in equipping participants with the values of leadership, Islam, and integrity, although there was room for improvement in time and material management.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of data obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation, it can be concluded that: a). The Branch Leader of the Muhammadiyah Student Association of Muhammadiyah Cipanas High School has implemented character education in the Islamic work program in the field of Islamic da'wah studies through efforts to internalize Islamic values into the participants which are described through three dimensions, namely 1) Islamic character values in aqidah, 2) Islamic character values in morals, and 3) Islamic character values in worship. b). The strategy of the Branch Leader of the Muhammadiyah Student Association of SMA Muhammadiyah Cipanas in implementing character education in the Islamic work program in the field of Islamic da'wah studies in internalizing Islamic values into the members of the organization is carried out through introductory activities such as FORTASI activities, training activities such as PKDTM 1, and routine activities or habituation such as tadarus before the activity takes place. c). Several factors inhibit the character education process in the Islamic work program in the field of Islamic da'wah studies in internalizing Islamic values into the members of the organization in the Branch Leadership of the Muhammadiyah Student Association of SMA Muhammadiyah Cipanas, namely 1) Focus on Academic Achievement, 2) Lack of Interesting Religious Learning, 3) Popular Culture Influence, 4) Lack of Model Role, 5) Technological Development, 6) Lack of parental participation, and 7) Promiscuity. d). There are several solutions to deal with the factors that hinder the implementation of character education in the Islamic work program in the field of Islamic da'wah studies in internalizing Islamic values into the members of the organization in the Branch Leadership of the Muhammadiyah Student Association of SMA Muhammadiyah Cipanas, namely: 1) Integration of Islamic Values in All Subjects, 2) Development of a Creative Religious Curriculum, 3) Improvement of the Quality of Teachers about Religion, 4) Cooperation with Parents, 5) Utilization of Technology, 6) Formation of Community/Learning Group, 7) Interesting Religious Activities, and 8) Continuous Evaluation.

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Author Contribution

Gani Darmawan, M. Abdurrozaq, Fauziah Inayati: Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing – review & editing.

Conflicts of Interest

All authors declare no conflict of interest.

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