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The Role of *Tahfidzul Al-Quran* Teachers in Forming Students' Religious Character

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ABSTRACT. One innovation that can reduce students' moral problems is the habituation of religious character, namely tahfidzul Al Qur'an. So the author is interested in researching the application of tahfidzul Al Qur'an and the role of tahfidzul Al Qur'an teachers in shaping students' religious character. The aim of this research is to describe the application of tahfidzul Al Qur'an and the role of tahfidzul Al Qur'an teachers in shaping students' religious character. The benefits of research for teachers can be to develop students' religious character in accordance with the teachings of the Islamic religion, for students it can be used as guidance, direction or encouragement to carry out good deeds in accordance with the teachings of Islam, for researchers to develop knowledge and increase insight and knowledge. This research uses a qualitative approach, with data collection techniques using observation, interviews and documentation, taking place at MI Muhamadiyah Kalikuning I with research subjects of 20 students from grades 5 and 6, teachers and school principals. The results of the study concluded that the application of *Tahfidzul Al-Qur'an* to the education of students' religious character is reflected through student behavior, the *Tahfidzul Al-Qur'an* teacher plays a role in shaping students' religious character through the process of forming akhlakul karimah in Islamic religious teachings according to the Qur'an and Hadith.

Keywords: *Tahfidzul Al-Qur'an, Teacher, Students' religious character.*

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INTRODUCTION

Education plays an important role not only in developing students' knowledge and academic abilities but also in cultivating the values, attitudes, and behaviours that shape their character. Within Islamic education, these objectives are closely connected to the development of religious understanding, ethical responsibility, and the application of Islamic teachings in everyday life. Suhayib and Ansyari (2023) identify three interconnected purposes of Islamic Religious Education, namely *ta'leem* (knowledge acquisition), *ta'deeb* (ethical formation), and *tarbiyah* (holistic personal development) (Suhayib & Ansyari, 2023). Their findings indicate that these purposes are not always adequately integrated into curriculum design, particularly when educational outcomes focus predominantly on knowledge acquisition. Similarly, Metcalfe and Moulin-Stożek (2021) highlight the relationship between religious education and character formation while

demonstrating that teachers' understandings of this relationship differ across educational settings (Metcalfe & Moulin-Stożek, 2021). These perspectives suggest that developing students' religious character requires educational practices that connect religious knowledge with personal values and everyday behaviour.

One important component of Islamic education is the teaching of the Qur'an, which includes learning to read, recite, understand, and memorise its verses. Qur'anic memorisation, commonly referred to as *tahfidzul Qur'an*, occupies a significant place in various forms of Muslim education and is often organised through sustained teacher–student interaction and repeated learning activities. Berglund and Gent (2019), in their research on Qur'anic and non-confessional religious education, demonstrate that memorisation is an important dimension of Muslim students' educational experiences and may be understood alongside broader forms of learning and reflection (Berglund & Gent, 2019). Research by Bowie et al. (2022) further highlights the importance of teachers' pedagogical engagement with sacred texts, suggesting that religious learning involves more than the reproduction of textual knowledge (Bowie et al., 2022). Within Muslim educational settings, Alkouatli (2023) also emphasises the importance of considering religious understandings of human development when examining how Muslim educators support learners' growth (Alkouatli, 2023). Together, these studies provide a foundation for investigating Qur'anic memorisation as an educational practice that may involve cognitive learning, religious formation, and interpersonal guidance, without assuming that memorisation alone necessarily produces religious character.

Teachers have a central responsibility in connecting the objectives of Islamic education with students' actual learning experiences. In the context of *tahfidzul Qur'an*, their responsibilities extend beyond delivering instructional material and assessing memorisation achievement. They may also guide students' learning routines, demonstrate appropriate conduct, provide encouragement, and create opportunities for students to reflect on religious teachings. Research by Alhashmi and Moussa-Inaty (2021) identifies professional learning as an important component of Islamic education teachers' development, particularly in responding to changing educational demands (Alhashmi & Moussa-Inaty, 2021). Similarly, Tuna (2022) demonstrates that the professionalisation of Islamic religious education teachers involves multiple dimensions, including educational preparation, professional identity, and institutional conditions (Tuna, 2022). These findings suggest that understanding the role of tahfidz teachers requires attention to both their instructional competence and their capacity to support students' broader religious development.

One dimension of the teacher's role in character formation is moral modelling. Students may encounter examples of desirable conduct through their teachers' everyday interactions, decisions, and responses to educational challenges. Henderson (2024) conceptualises emulation as an important dimension of moral learning and explains how individuals may develop virtues through engagement with moral exemplars (Henderson, 2024). Empirical research by Han and Dawson (2024) further indicates that the relatability and perceived attainability of moral exemplars are associated with motivational responses that may encourage emulation (Han & Dawson, 2024). Nevertheless, Sanderse (2024) cautions against assuming that students automatically identify teachers as their moral role models, emphasising the importance of students' own experiences and choices in moral development (Sanderse, 2024). Applied to tahfidz education, these perspectives suggest that teachers' consistency, respectful communication, and everyday conduct may provide opportunities for religious character formation, although their influence must be understood through students' actual experiences rather than assumed from the teacher's position alone.

Another important consideration is the relationship between religious habituation and the internalisation of values. Repeated religious activities are often incorporated into Islamic school routines to familiarise students with practices such as Qur'anic recitation, prayer, remembrance of

Allah, and respectful interaction. However, repetition should not be equated automatically with meaningful moral development. Athanassoulis (2024) explains that habituation in moral education involves the development of emotions, reasoning, and actions rather than behavioural repetition alone (Athanassoulis, 2024). Hart (2022) similarly argues for a more participatory approach to character education in which moral development is connected to students' engagement with the practices and values of their educational communities (Hart, 2022). These perspectives indicate that religious habituation may be more educationally meaningful when students are encouraged to understand the purposes of their activities and connect them with personal responsibility and everyday conduct.

The relationship between religious practices and students' moral development also involves the social environment in which learning takes place. Mohd Yusoff et al. (2022), in their research involving Islamic secondary school students, found that spiritual dispositions and social norms were significantly associated with students' moral judgment (Mohd Yusoff et al., 2022). Although the study was conducted in a different educational setting, its findings indicate the importance of examining religious development in relation to both personal orientation and social influences. At the elementary level, Aseery (2024) identifies interactive teaching, supportive feedback, and inclusive instructional practices as relevant approaches for encouraging motivation and engagement in religious education (Aseery, 2024). These findings suggest that the potential contribution of tahfidz activities to religious character formation may depend on how students experience daily routines, teacher guidance, peer relationships, and opportunities for meaningful participation.

Religious formation also extends beyond formal classroom instruction. Students encounter religious values through interactions with parents, teachers, peers, and the wider community, creating different opportunities for learning and practising their beliefs. Kolb (2023) demonstrates that Muslim parents hold diverse expectations regarding religious education and the roles of schools and other religious institutions (Kolb, 2023). In Indonesia, Chanifah et al. (2021) examine the development of a spirituality-based Islamic education framework through educational activities and institutional practices (Chanifah et al., 2021). Although their study concerns university students, it illustrates the relevance of integrating spiritual development with organised educational experiences. These findings provide a rationale for examining how school-based tahfidz programmes operate within the broader educational environment and how teachers encourage students to extend religious practices beyond school.

At the same time, religious character formation should not be reduced to unquestioning conformity or the performance of religious routines. Education also involves developing students' capacity to understand the meaning of religious values and apply them responsibly in social relationships. Wijaya Mulya et al. (2022) examine how Muslim pre-service teachers negotiate religious identity and tolerance in Indonesia, highlighting the complexity of translating religious commitments into educational attitudes (Wijaya Mulya et al., 2022). Qazi (2023) illustrates how schooling contributes to the construction of religious identities, while also drawing attention to the implications of educational representations for minority groups (Qazi, 2023). From a broader religious education perspective, Kimanen (2023) emphasises the relationship between religious education, students' agency, and social justice (Kimanen, 2023). These perspectives suggest that religious character should be examined not only through participation in worship but also through students' responsibility, respect for others, and understanding of the ethical implications of their actions.

The process of character formation may also be supported by narratives and examples that enable students to reflect on desirable behaviour. Brooks et al. (2024) discuss the educational potential of biographical narratives in moral education while emphasising the importance of relevance, realism, and critical engagement with moral exemplars (Brooks et al., 2024). Research by Hammond et al. (2024) further demonstrates that adolescents identify different public figures

as character role models for different reasons (Hammond et al., 2024). Although these studies were not conducted in tahfidz classrooms and involved different age groups, they provide useful perspectives on the importance of understanding which examples students find meaningful. In Qur'anic education, this raises the possibility of examining how teachers use religious stories, explanations, and personal conduct to communicate values associated with honesty, patience, discipline, and responsibility.

However, the expectation that teachers consistently demonstrate exemplary character must also be considered alongside their professional and personal circumstances. Kotsonis and Dunne (2024) caution that unrealistic expectations surrounding pedagogical exemplars may have negative consequences for educators' well-being and professional motivation (Kotsonis & Dunne, 2024). The relationship between teachers' identities, personal values, and resilience within educational environments. These perspectives suggest that examining tahfidz teachers as moral models should not imply that character formation depends exclusively on their individual qualities. Institutional support, working conditions, and professional relationships may also influence their ability to provide consistent guidance.

Teacher–student relationships provide another important perspective for understanding how educational guidance contributes to personal development. Whitlock (2024) discusses the contribution of school-based mentorship to character education, drawing attention to the developmental value of supportive relationships with adults (Whitlock, 2024). In religious instruction, BinTaleb (2021) demonstrates how guided inquiry and collaborative activities can be incorporated into learning about Islam and Islamic civilisation (BinTaleb, 2021). Although this evidence does not directly test religious character development through Qur'anic memorisation, it reinforces the importance of examining what teachers actually do during instructional interactions. In tahfidz programmes, this includes how teachers respond to learning difficulties, motivate students, explain religious values, and support the development of responsible learning habits.

These considerations are relevant to MI Muhammadiyah Kalikuning I, where the present study focuses on the role of tahfidzul Qur'an teachers in forming students' religious character. As reported in the preliminary account of the research setting, the school incorporates Qur'anic reading and memorisation alongside religious activities such as morning *dhikr*, *Dhuha* prayer, congregational *Dhuhr* prayer, and religious extracurricular activities. The preliminary account also identifies concerns regarding some students' Qur'anic reading abilities, engagement in religious learning outside school, and seriousness in participating in communal worship. These observations provide an initial basis for investigating the relationship between organised religious activities, teacher guidance, and students' everyday religious behaviour. Nevertheless, such observations should be treated as preliminary contextual information rather than conclusive evidence of declining religiosity or the effectiveness of particular teaching practices.

Although existing scholarship provides valuable insights into Islamic educational purposes, religious formation, moral modelling, habituation, and teacher professionalism, the reviewed studies address these dimensions through different research contexts and approaches. The extent to which these perspectives explain the everyday practices of tahfidz teachers in Indonesian Islamic elementary schools remains insufficiently established by the literature examined. In particular, further context-specific investigation is needed to understand how teachers combine Qur'anic memorisation instruction with personal example, religious habituation, motivation, and guidance, and how students experience these practices in relation to their religious character formation. Therefore, this study aims to examine the role of tahfidzul Qur'an teachers in forming students' religious character at MI Muhammadiyah Kalikuning I. Specifically, it seeks to describe the implementation of the tahfidz programme and associated religious activities, identify the teachers' instructional and character-building roles, and explore the factors that support or constrain the internalisation of religious values in students' everyday school experiences. The

study is expected to provide a context-sensitive understanding of teacher-mediated religious character formation and contribute practical insights for strengthening Qur'anic education in Islamic elementary schools.

METHOD

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach using a descriptive single-case study design to examine the role of *Tahfidzul Al-Qur'an* teachers in shaping students' religious character at MI Muhammadiyah Kalikuning I. The case study approach was considered appropriate because the research focused on understanding educational practices, teacher-student interactions, and religious character formation within a specific institutional context. According to Yin (2018), case study research enables an in-depth investigation of a phenomenon within its real-life context through the examination of multiple sources of evidence (Yin, 2018). The study specifically explored the implementation of the Qur'anic memorisation programme, the roles of teachers in cultivating religious values, and the supporting and inhibiting factors influencing students' religious character development.

The research was conducted at MI Muhammadiyah Kalikuning I, involving 20 students from grades five and six, *Tahfidzul Al-Qur'an* teachers, and the school principal as research participants. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations were conducted over approximately two months to examine the implementation of school-based religious activities, including Qur'anic recitation and memorisation, Dhuha prayers, congregational prayers, and other religious habituation programmes. Interviews with teachers, the school principal, and participating students were used to explore their experiences and perspectives regarding the implementation of the tahfidz programme, teachers' contributions to character formation, and the factors facilitating or hindering religious character development. Documentation was used to complement the observational and interview data, including photographs of religious activities and available records of students' memorisation progress and participation in school programmes.

The qualitative data analysis was structured according to the interactive model developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2020), consisting of three interconnected processes: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification (Miles et al., 2020). Data condensation involved selecting, organising, coding, and categorising relevant information obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation. The analysis focused on recurring themes related to the implementation of the tahfidz programme, teachers' roles as educators and role models, religious habituation practices, students' religious behaviour, and supporting and inhibiting factors. During the data display stage, the organised information was presented through descriptive narratives and thematic matrices to facilitate comparisons among participants and data sources. Finally, conclusions were developed by identifying recurring patterns, examining relationships among themes, and verifying interpretations against the available evidence. These processes were intended to provide a systematic understanding of how *Tahfidzul Al-Qur'an* teachers contribute to students' religious character formation within the school environment.

To strengthen the trustworthiness of the findings, evidence from observations, interviews, and documentation was considered comparatively through methodological and source triangulation. This approach enabled the examination of consistencies and differences among participants' accounts, observed religious practices, and supporting documents. Particular attention was given to distinguishing teachers' intended educational objectives from students' actual participation and observable behaviour. The findings were interpreted within the specific institutional context of MI Muhammadiyah Kalikuning I, with the aim of providing a contextually

grounded understanding of teacher-mediated religious character formation rather than making statistical generalisations to other Islamic educational institutions.

Table 1. Research Design, Data Collection, and Analysis Framework

Research Components	Methods and Procedures	Research Focus
Research Approach	Qualitative research using a descriptive single-case study design.	Exploring the role of *Tahfidzul Al-Qur'an* teachers in developing students' religious character within a specific educational setting.
Research Setting	MI Muhammadiyah Kalikuning I.	Examining the implementation of Qur'anic memorisation and religious character education in an Islamic elementary school.
Research Participants	20 students from grades five and six, *Tahfidzul Al-Qur'an* teachers, and the school principal.	Obtaining information from students, educators, and school leadership regarding religious learning practices.
Observation	Direct observation of school-based religious activities over approximately two months.	Examining Qur'anic recitation and memorisation, Dhuha prayers, congregational prayers, and religious habituation practices.
Interviews	Interviews with participating students, *Tahfidzul Al-Qur'an* teachers, and the school principal.	Exploring teachers' roles, students' experiences, programme implementation, and supporting and inhibiting factors.
Documentation	Examination of photographs of religious activities and available records of students' memorisation progress and participation.	Providing supporting evidence regarding the implementation of tahfidz activities and religious character formation.
Data Condensation	Selecting, organising, coding, and categorising qualitative information based on the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña analytical framework.	Identifying themes related to teacher roles, religious habituation, student behaviour, and implementation challenges.
Data Display	Organising findings into descriptive narratives and thematic matrices.	Facilitating comparisons among observation findings, interview responses, and documentary evidence.
Conclusion Drawing and Verification	Identifying recurring patterns, interpreting relationships among themes, and checking conclusions against the available evidence.	Developing context-specific conclusions about teachers' contributions to religious character formation.
Trustworthiness	Source and methodological triangulation through comparison of interviews,	Examining consistency, differences, and credibility across multiple sources of qualitative evidence.

	observations, and documentation.

Table 1 presents the methodological framework employed to investigate the role of *Tahfidzul Al-Qur'an* teachers in shaping students' religious character at MI Muhammadiyah Kalikuning I. The study adopts a descriptive qualitative approach with a single-case study design, involving 20 students from grades five and six, *Tahfidzul Al-Qur'an* teachers, and the school principal. Data collection encompasses observations conducted over approximately two months, interviews with research participants, and documentation of religious learning activities and students' memorisation progress. The analytical framework follows the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2020), which consists of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. These stages provide a systematic approach to identifying patterns related to teachers' instructional roles, religious habituation practices, students' religious behaviour, and factors influencing programme implementation. Source and methodological triangulation are incorporated into the framework to support the credibility of the findings through comparisons across different sources of evidence. Overall, this methodological structure provides a foundation for understanding how teachers' educational practices contribute to students' religious character formation within the specific institutional context of the study.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The findings indicate that religious character formation at MI Muhammadiyah Kalikuning I is supported by structured religious activities, teacher guidance, and daily habituation practices. Based on observations conducted at the school, students generally demonstrated positive attitudes, particularly in communicating politely and showing respect towards teachers and other adults. These behaviours were encouraged through religious programmes implemented as part of the school's educational activities. The programmes were designed not only to strengthen students' understanding of Islamic teachings but also to encourage the development of religious habits and appropriate behaviour in everyday school life.

Religious character formation was integrated into several routine activities, including Dhuha prayers, morning dhikr, Qur'anic recitation and memorisation, prayers before and after learning activities, and congregational Dhuhr prayers. Students also participated in extracurricular speech activities conducted in three languages: Indonesian, Arabic, and English. These activities provided regular opportunities for students to participate in religious practices under the guidance and supervision of teachers. The integration of religious routines into the school schedule reflected an institutional effort to cultivate discipline, responsibility, and awareness of religious obligations. However, students' participation and commitment to these activities were not always consistent, indicating differences in their motivation and engagement.

The observations further identified three principal roles performed by *Tahfidzul Al-Qur'an* teachers in supporting students' religious character formation: role models, guides, and motivators. As role models, teachers demonstrated religious conduct through their participation in school activities and daily interactions with students. They encouraged students to practise respectful communication, maintain discipline, and participate in religious activities. As guides, teachers provided direction during Qur'anic learning and religious habituation activities, helping students understand their responsibilities and the importance of practising Islamic teachings. As motivators, teachers encouraged students to remain enthusiastic about learning and memorising the Qur'an, particularly when they experienced difficulties or demonstrated limited interest in the learning process.

The *Tahfidzul Al-Qur'an* programme represented an important component of these character-building activities. Students were encouraged to memorise Qur'anic verses and submit their memorisation regularly to teachers. These activities were intended to develop consistency, responsibility, honesty, and perseverance. Regular memorisation submissions required students to prepare their learning materials, maintain their memorisation, and communicate their readiness to teachers. The programme also provided opportunities for teachers to monitor students' progress and offer individual guidance. Nevertheless, the available findings primarily describe the organisation of these activities and their intended educational values rather than directly measuring changes in students' religious character.

Several supporting factors were identified through observations and interviews. First, cooperation among school personnel contributed to the implementation of religious character education. MI Muhammadiyah Kalikuning I had ten teaching staff members, with the school principal, classroom teachers, and *Tahfidzul Al-Qur'an* teachers participating in religious programmes and student guidance. Second, the availability of scheduled religious activities supported the continuity of character-building practices within the school environment. Third, the school's religious atmosphere, reflected in its vision of creating a generation of *solih* and *solihah* students, provided an institutional foundation for integrating religious values into everyday educational activities.

Despite these supporting conditions, the interviews revealed several challenges affecting the implementation of religious character education. One prominent obstacle was limited parental supervision of students' religious activities at home. Some students reportedly received insufficient guidance in maintaining Qur'anic memorisation and practising religious habits outside school. The influence of peers and the surrounding home environment was also identified as a challenge, particularly when students encountered behaviours inconsistent with the values encouraged at school. These circumstances created difficulties in maintaining continuity between school-based religious habituation and students' activities outside the classroom.

Another challenge concerned the availability and distribution of teaching responsibilities. Although the school had ten teaching staff members, some *Tahfidzul Al-Qur'an* teachers also served as classroom teachers or taught other subjects. These overlapping responsibilities limited the time and attention available for supervising Qur'anic memorisation and religious habituation activities. Furthermore, differences in students' motivation affected their participation in the tahfidz programme. Some students demonstrated limited enthusiasm for memorising the Qur'an and required additional encouragement and supervision.

The findings also identified several proposed responses to these challenges. Strengthening communication and cooperation between teachers and parents was considered important for supporting Qur'anic memorisation and religious practices at home. Parental involvement through *mutaba'ah*, or the monitoring of students' daily religious activities, was proposed as a means of improving continuity between school and home. Greater cooperation among teaching staff was also identified as a potential way to improve student supervision. In addition, teachers emphasised the importance of providing continuous encouragement during religious habituation and Qur'anic memorisation activities. These responses were presented as practical measures for addressing the identified obstacles, although their effectiveness was not independently evaluated in the available findings.

Figure 1. Summary of Research Findings on the Role of *Tahfidzul Al-Qur'an* Teachers in Forming Students' Religious Character

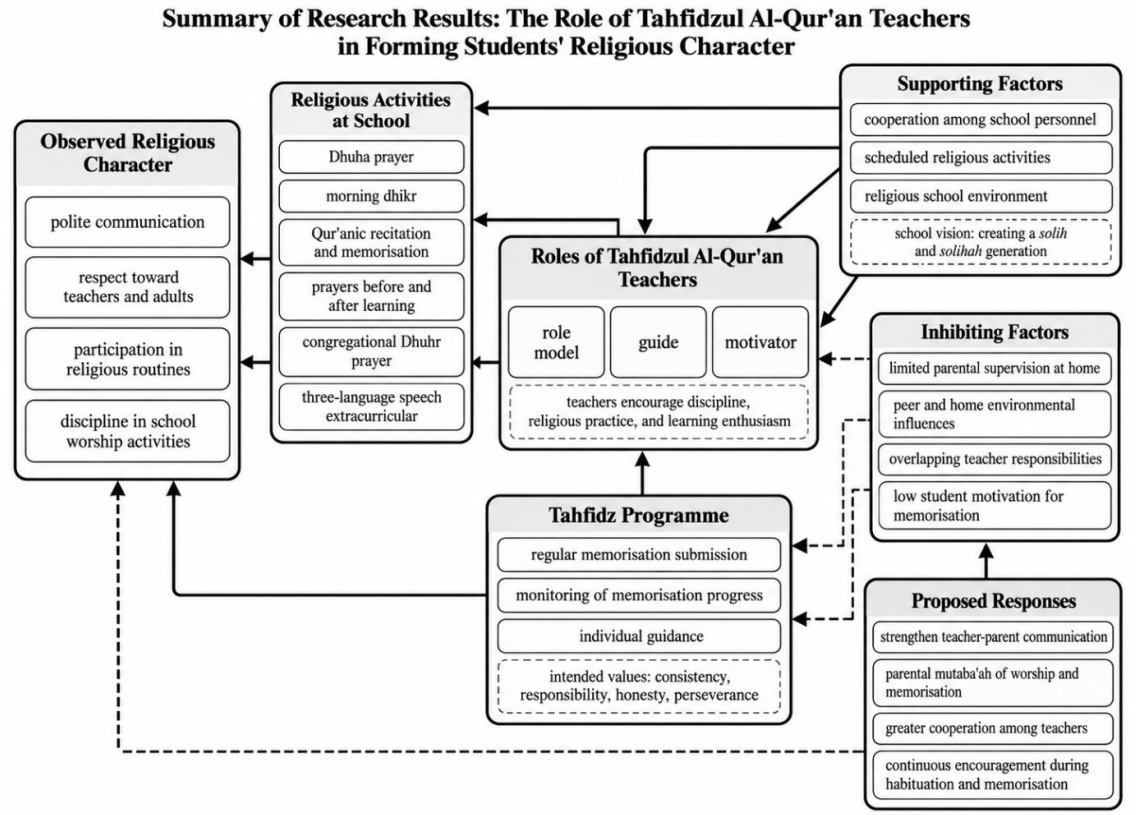


Figure. Summary of qualitative findings from observations and interviews at MI Muhammadiyah Kalikuning I.

Figure 1 illustrates the main findings regarding the role of *Tahfidzul Al-Qur'an* teachers in shaping students' religious character at MI Muhammadiyah Kalikuning I. The findings identify three primary teacher roles: role models, guides, and motivators, which are reflected in the implementation of religious activities, including Dhuha prayers, morning dhikr, Qur'anic recitation and memorisation, congregational Dhuhr prayers, and religious extracurricular programmes. These activities provide opportunities for students to develop religious habits, as reflected in observed behaviours such as polite communication, respect for teachers and adults, and participation in school-based religious practices. The *Tahfidzul Al-Qur'an* programme also incorporates regular memorisation submissions, progress monitoring, and individual guidance, which are intended to encourage discipline, honesty, responsibility, consistency, and perseverance. The implementation of these activities is supported by cooperation among school personnel, structured religious programmes, and a religious school environment. However, several inhibiting factors were identified, including limited parental supervision, influences from peers and home environments, overlapping teaching responsibilities, and differences in students' motivation. To address these challenges, the findings highlight proposed measures such as strengthening teacher–parent communication, implementing parental mutaba'ah to monitor religious practices, improving collaboration among teachers, and providing continuous encouragement to students. Overall, the figure demonstrates the interconnected roles of teachers, religious habituation activities, institutional support, and family involvement in students' religious character formation, while recognising that the intended character outcomes require further evaluation to establish their long-term development.

DISCUSSION

The findings demonstrate that the role of *Tahfidzul Al-Qur'an* teachers in religious character formation extends beyond the transmission of Qur'anic knowledge and the assessment of memorisation achievement. Teachers participate in a broader educational process that connects religious instruction with students' attitudes, habits, and everyday behaviour. Their roles as models, guides, and motivators are closely related because each contributes to different aspects of students' religious development. Through personal example, teachers provide observable patterns of religious conduct; through guidance, they help students understand the expectations associated with religious practices; and through motivation, they encourage continued participation in learning activities. These interconnected roles suggest that religious character formation should be understood as an educational process involving knowledge, behaviour, and social interaction.

The implementation of daily religious habituation constitutes another important dimension of character formation at MI Muhammadiyah Kalikuning I. Activities such as Dhuha prayers, morning dhikr, Qur'anic memorisation, and congregational worship create repeated opportunities for students to practise Islamic teachings within the school environment. Regular participation may help students become familiar with religious obligations and develop consistent patterns of behaviour. However, habituation should not be interpreted as evidence of character internalisation solely because students participate in scheduled activities. Meaningful religious character formation requires students to understand the purposes of these practices and demonstrate relevant values beyond situations involving direct teacher supervision. Therefore, religious habituation is best understood as a potential foundation for character development rather than a guarantee of lasting behavioural change.

The *Tahfidzul Al-Qur'an* programme offers particular opportunities to integrate religious learning with personal responsibility. Memorising and maintaining Qur'anic verses requires sustained attention, repeated practice, and commitment to learning tasks. Regular memorisation submissions may provide opportunities to cultivate discipline, perseverance, and honesty, especially when students are encouraged to acknowledge their difficulties and demonstrate responsibility for their learning progress. Nevertheless, the relationship between memorisation activities and religious character is not necessarily direct. Students may achieve memorisation targets without consistently demonstrating the ethical qualities associated with religious education. For this reason, the educational value of the tahfidz programme should be examined through both students' learning processes and their observable behaviour.

Teacher modelling is especially relevant because elementary school students frequently learn through observation and interaction with adults. When teachers demonstrate respectful communication, consistency in religious practices, and responsible behaviour, students are exposed to practical examples of the values being taught. The participation of teachers in congregational prayers and other religious activities can reinforce the relationship between religious instruction and everyday conduct. However, the influence of modelling depends on how students interpret and respond to their teachers' behaviour. Consequently, teachers' exemplary conduct should be accompanied by explanation, dialogue, and opportunities for students to reflect on the meaning of religious values.

The findings also indicate that religious character formation is influenced by the relationship between the school and students' home environments. School-based religious routines may provide structured opportunities for learning and practice, but their continuity can be affected by parental involvement, peer relationships, and daily activities outside school. Limited parental supervision may create differences between the religious habits encouraged at school and those practised at home. This highlights the importance of developing cooperative

relationships between teachers and parents, particularly in monitoring Qur'anic memorisation and supporting students' religious responsibilities. The proposed use of mutaba'ah may provide a practical mechanism for communication and shared supervision, although it should be implemented in ways that encourage students' understanding and independence rather than merely recording compliance with religious routines.

Institutional support also plays an important role in enabling teachers to perform their character-building responsibilities. Cooperation among the principal, classroom teachers, and *Tahfidzul Al-Qur'an* teachers creates opportunities for reinforcing religious values across different school activities. Nevertheless, the overlapping teaching responsibilities identified in this study suggest that institutional commitment must be accompanied by appropriate workload distribution and sufficient opportunities for student guidance. When teachers are required to manage several subjects and responsibilities simultaneously, their ability to provide individual support during memorisation and habituation activities may be constrained. Improving coordination among teaching staff could therefore strengthen the consistency of religious programmes without placing excessive responsibility on individual tahfidz teachers.

Students' motivation represents another important consideration. Differences in enthusiasm for Qur'anic memorisation suggest that students may respond differently to learning expectations and religious routines. Continuous encouragement, constructive communication, and recognition of individual progress may help teachers respond to these differences. Rather than emphasising memorisation achievement alone, teachers can encourage students to appreciate the learning process, recognise personal improvement, and understand the relevance of Qur'anic teachings to everyday life. Such an approach may create a more supportive learning environment in which religious activities are experienced as meaningful educational practices rather than solely institutional obligations.

Taken together, the findings suggest that religious character formation at MI Muhammadiyah Kalikuning I involves the interaction of teacher guidance, habitual religious practices, student motivation, institutional support, and family involvement. These elements do not operate independently but collectively shape the conditions in which students encounter, practise, and interpret Islamic values. The study highlights the importance of maintaining coherence between teachers' personal conduct, the religious programmes implemented by the school, and the expectations communicated to students and their families. At the same time, the findings should be interpreted within the boundaries of the qualitative case study. The observations and interviews provide contextual evidence of educational practices, supporting conditions, and implementation challenges, but they do not establish a causal relationship between participation in the tahfidz programme and measurable improvements in religious character.

The practical implication is that strengthening religious character education requires more than increasing the frequency of Qur'anic memorisation or other religious activities. Schools also need to improve the quality of teacher guidance, provide opportunities for meaningful reflection, support cooperation with parents, and address limitations in teaching resources. Future investigations could examine how students interpret religious values learned through tahfidz activities and whether these values are consistently demonstrated across school and home environments. Such research would provide a more comprehensive understanding of how Qur'anic education contributes to the development of religious character among elementary school students.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that *Tahfidzul Al-Qur'an* teachers play an important role in supporting students' religious character formation at MI Muhammadiyah Kalikuning I through three interconnected functions:

role models, guides, and motivators. Their contributions are reflected in the implementation of structured religious activities, including Qur'anic recitation and memorisation, Dhuha prayers, morning dhikr, congregational Dhuhr prayers, and religious extracurricular programmes. These activities provide opportunities for students to practise Islamic values through daily habituation and teacher-guided interactions. The findings indicate that religious character formation is reflected in observable behaviours such as polite communication, respect for teachers and adults, and participation in religious practices. Furthermore, regular memorisation activities and teacher guidance are intended to foster discipline, honesty, responsibility, consistency, and perseverance. However, participation in religious activities and achievement in Qur'anic memorisation should not automatically be interpreted as evidence of lasting character development.

The study also identifies several factors influencing the implementation of religious character education. Cooperation among school personnel, structured religious programmes, and a supportive religious environment facilitate teachers' efforts, while limited parental supervision, peer and home environmental influences, overlapping teaching responsibilities, and differences in students' motivation present challenges. Strengthening teacher–parent communication, encouraging parental *mutaba'ah*, improving collaboration among teachers, and providing continuous student motivation are proposed as practical responses to these challenges. These findings highlight the importance of collaboration between schools and families in supporting the continuity of religious education beyond the classroom.

This study contributes a context-specific understanding of how *Tahfidzul Al-Qur'an* teachers integrate Qur'anic learning, religious habituation, and personal guidance within Islamic elementary education. Nevertheless, as a qualitative case study conducted at a single institution with observations covering approximately two months, its findings are limited to the educational context examined and do not establish a causal relationship between the tahfidz programme and students' long-term religious character development. Future research is therefore recommended to investigate students' experiences across different Islamic educational institutions and examine the continuity of religious behaviours in school and home environments through longitudinal or comparative approaches. Such investigations could provide stronger evidence regarding the contribution of Qur'anic memorisation programmes to students' religious and moral development.

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