



Strengthening Students' Independent Character through Practice and Example in Integrative PAI Learning at SD Negeri 014/XI Pelayang Raya

Nera Irma Sari¹, Padya Hayati², Ahmad Jamin³, Oki Mitra⁴

Institut Agama Islam Negeri Kerinci, Indonesia¹⁻⁴

Email Korespondensi : nerairma37171@gmail.com, fadyahayati548@gmail.com,
ahmad_jamin@yahoo.co.id, okimitra1990@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the strengthening of students' independent character through habit formation and role modelling in integrated Islamic Education (PAI) lessons at SD Negeri 014/XI Pelayang Raya. This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach, with data collection techniques including observation, interviews and documentation. The results of the study indicate that the strengthening of students' independent character is achieved through habits integrated into Islamic Education lessons, such as praying, reciting the Qur'an, praying in congregation, classroom duty, maintaining cleanliness, and completing tasks independently. Teachers' role modelling through attitudes of discipline, responsibility, honesty, and independence plays a crucial role in shaping students' character. The success of the programme is supported by the school's commitment, a religious culture, parental cooperation, and student motivation, whilst the obstacles include differences in family upbringing, excessive use of electronic devices, diverse student characteristics, and limited learning time. Overall, the practice of habits and setting a good example in integrated PAI learning is effective in fostering students' independent character.

Keywords: independent character, habit formation, role modelling, integrative Islamic religious education.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan penguatan karakter mandiri siswa melalui pembentukan kebiasaan dan keteladanan dalam pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam Terpadu (PAI) di SD Negeri 014/XI Pelayang Raya. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif, dengan teknik pengumpulan data meliputi observasi, wawancara dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penguatan karakter mandiri siswa dicapai melalui kebiasaan-kebiasaan yang diintegrasikan dalam pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam, seperti shalat, mengaji, shalat berjamaah, tugas kelas, menjaga kebersihan, dan menyelesaikan tugas secara mandiri. Keteladanan guru melalui sikap disiplin, tanggung jawab, jujur, dan mandiri berperan penting dalam membentuk karakter siswa. Keberhasilan program ini ditopang oleh komitmen sekolah, budaya keagamaan, kerjasama orang tua, dan motivasi siswa, sedangkan kendalanya antara lain perbedaan pola asuh keluarga, penggunaan perangkat elektronik yang berlebihan, karakteristik siswa yang beragam, dan keterbatasan waktu belajar. Secara keseluruhan, pembiasaan dan pemberian contoh yang baik dalam pembelajaran PAI terpadu efektif dalam menumbuhkan karakter mandiri siswa.

Kata Kunci: karakter mandiri, pembentukan kebiasaan, keteladanan, pendidikan agama Islam integratif.

INTRODUCTION

Education is the primary means of developing human resources who are not only academically excellent but also possess strong character. In the context of national education, strengthening character education has become a key priority, as various social phenomena indicate a decline in moral values, responsibility, discipline and independence among students. Independence is one of the key character traits that needs to be instilled from primary education onwards, as it relates to pupils' ability to make decisions, complete tasks, and take responsibility for themselves (Oktovianti et al., 2024).

Independence is an attitude that demonstrates an individual's ability to carry out various activities without relying excessively on others. Pupils with an independent character tend to be able to manage their own learning, complete tasks responsibly, and possess the self-confidence to tackle various problems. Therefore, fostering an independent character from primary school age forms a vital foundation for shaping a resilient and principled generation. However, the reality on the ground shows that pupils' independent character still faces various challenges. Advances in digital technology, overprotective parenting, and students' habit of relying on parental assistance have led to many learners lacking initiative and responsibility towards the tasks assigned to them. This situation is evident in the fact that there are still students who are reluctant to complete tasks independently, lack confidence in their learning, and are unable to manage their learning activities optimally (Oktovianti et al., 2024).

As formal educational institutions, schools bear a significant responsibility for addressing these issues through various character education programmes. One subject that plays a strategic role in character development is Islamic Religious Education (IRE). IRE serves not only as a means of imparting religious knowledge, but also as a medium for the internalisation of moral values and ethical conduct that can be put into practice in pupils' daily lives. Essentially, PAI teaching imparts various Islamic values that encourage pupils to become responsible, disciplined, and independent individuals. These values can be instilled through various teaching strategies that emphasise direct experience, the cultivation of positive behaviour, and the example set by teachers and the school environment. Thus, PAI teaching has great potential to shape pupils' independent character in a sustainable manner.

One approach considered effective in character building is through habit formation. Habit formation is the process of instilling values on an ongoing basis so that they become part of pupils' everyday behaviour. Activities such as carrying out tasks without being told, preparing one's own study materials, performing religious duties with personal awareness, and taking responsibility for the cleanliness of the school environment are forms of habit formation that can foster students' independent character (Oktovianti et al., 2024).

In addition to habit formation, setting a good example also plays a vital role in character development. As figures who are close to their pupils, teachers serve as real-life examples in instilling the values of independence. Attitudes of discipline, responsibility, consistency, and the teacher's ability to demonstrate positive

behaviour are more easily emulated by students than through verbal instruction alone. Therefore, setting a good example is a key factor in the success of character education in schools (Kusumawardani et al., 2021). In the current development of education, Islamic Education (PAI) is no longer taught in isolation but employs an integrative approach. The integrative approach links Islamic values with all learning activities and school culture so that character education is not only the responsibility of PAI teachers but becomes part of the overall educational process. This approach enables students to gain a more holistic learning experience in internalising character values (Dessy & Fadriati, 2023).

Integrated Islamic Education (PAI) offers a significant opportunity to strengthen students' independent character, as Islamic values are not merely taught in theory but are also put into practice in daily life through various school activities. Consequently, students can both understand and adopt independent behaviour as part of the implementation of Islamic teachings in real life (Dessy & Fadriati, 2023).

Various previous studies have discussed character building through PAI education. Nurhasanah's research found that an Islamic values-based PAI learning model is capable of fostering students' character through the integration of theory and practice in learning. However, this research focused more on the development of learning models in general and did not specifically examine independent character through habit formation and role modelling.

Another study conducted by Anwar and Dahrul shows that fostering independent character can be achieved through strategies employed by Islamic Education teachers, such as assigning individual responsibilities, instilling Islamic values, and setting a good example. However, this study was conducted at lower secondary school level and has not yet examined the implementation of integrated Islamic Education at primary school level (K. Anwar & Dahrul, 2025).

Furthermore, research by Oktovianti and colleagues explains that the cultivation of the school environment plays a significant role in instilling independent character in primary school pupils. Nevertheless, this study placed greater emphasis on the general aspects of cultivating the school environment and did not specifically integrate this with Islamic Education (PAI) learning (Oktovianti et al., 2024).

Research on the integrative model of Islamic Religious Education has also been conducted by Anwar and colleagues, who found that the integration of Islamic values into learning is capable of effectively shaping students' character. However, the focus of that research was more directed towards social care, leaving scope for further research on independent character within the context of integrative Islamic Religious Education (C. Anwar et al., 2025).

Based on previous research, there is a research gap indicating that the majority of studies examine independent character through habit formation, role modelling, or teacher strategies in isolation. Research specifically examining the synergy between habit formation and role modelling in integrative Islamic Education (PAI) to strengthen the independent character of primary school pupils remains relatively limited. Furthermore, research conducted in the context of primary schools in the

Pelayang Raya region is also scarce (K. Anwar & Dahrul, 2025). On this basis, this study offers a novel focus by integrating the two main strategies of character education – habituation and modelling – within integrated Islamic Education (PAI) to strengthen the independent character of primary school pupils. This study also offers an empirical overview of how Islamic values are internalised through school culture, learning activities, and teachers' behaviour in a comprehensive manner to shape pupils' independent character (Dessy & Fadriati, 2023).

The selection of State Primary School 014/XI Pelayang Raya as the research site was based on the existence of various religious habit-forming programmes and exemplary teacher practices that are integrated into both learning activities and school culture. These conditions provide an opportunity to examine in depth the process of strengthening pupils' independent character through the implementation of integrative Islamic Education (PAI) in the context of primary education.

Consequently, this research is important to contribute both theoretically and practically to the development of character education based on Islamic values. Theoretically, this research can enrich studies on integrated PAI learning and independent character education. Practically, the research findings are expected to serve as a reference for teachers, headteachers, and education policymakers in designing effective character-building programmes through habit formation and exemplary behaviour within the primary school environment.

METHODS

1. Types and Approaches to Research

This study forms part of a field research project and adopts a descriptive qualitative approach. The qualitative approach was chosen because this study aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the process of internalising moral values through the integrated teaching of language and Islam within the natural context of primary school. This approach allows the researcher to explore, in a holistic and contextual manner, the meanings, processes and dynamics that manifest themselves in pedagogical interactions.

According to Sugiyono, qualitative research serves to study the natural conditions of the subject under investigation, where the researcher is the key instrument and where data analysis is carried out inductively. This view is corroborated by Lexy J. Moleong, who asserts that qualitative research aims to understand phenomena in depth through verbal descriptions.

The descriptive approach adopted in this study aims to systematically describe teachers' strategies, learning processes and the ways in which moral values are internalised in language teaching. This approach yields data in the form of detailed descriptions, thereby providing a comprehensive view of the phenomenon under study without manipulating the research variables (Muslim, 2017).

2. Research informants

The informants for this study were selected using a purposive sampling method, that is, a selection based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives. The primary informants are the teachers responsible for delivering Islamic

religious education, whilst the secondary informants include the headteacher of the 014/XI Pelayang Raya state primary school.

The selection of these informants is based on their role in the delivery of teaching and their direct involvement in the process of internalising moral values. Teachers act as the primary educators, the headteacher as the decision-maker, and the pupils as the recipients of these values. According to Matthew B. Miles and A. Michael Huberman, the selection of informants in qualitative research aims to obtain rich and in-depth data, rather than merely a quantitative representation.

3. Data collection techniques

The data collection techniques used in this study are based on three main methods, namely observation, interviews and literature review.

a. Observation

The observation was conducted directly within the language learning process in the classroom in order to determine how teachers incorporate moral values into their teaching activities. This was a participatory observation, in which the researcher was directly involved in the situation being observed.

According to John W. Creswell, observation in qualitative research is used to collect data on behaviour and social interactions in a natural setting.

b. Interview

In-depth interviews were conducted with Islamic Religious Education teachers and headteachers to gather information regarding strategies, challenges and experiences in the process of instilling moral values. Semi-structured interviews were used to ensure that the data collected remained focused yet flexible.

c. Documentation

Documentation is used to supplement data obtained from observations and interviews, such as lesson plans, syllabuses, photographs of learning activities, and other school documents relevant to the research.

According to Norman K. Denzin, the use of various data collection techniques in qualitative research aims to enhance validity through data triangulation.

4. Data Analysis Techniques

The data analysis in this study utilised the interactive model developed by Matthew B. Miles and A. Michael Huberman, which comprises three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Data reduction involved sorting and simplifying the data collected in the field, whilst data presentation was carried out in the form of descriptive narratives to ensure ease of understanding. The final stage is the drawing of conclusions, which is carried out continuously throughout the research process.

Data analysis is conducted inductively, that is, by drawing conclusions based on data collected in the field. This process continues until data saturation is achieved, ensuring that the research findings truly reflect the actual conditions. Consequently, data analysis in qualitative research is not linear, but rather interactive and ongoing.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Implementation of Habit Formation in Integrated Islamic Education as a Means of Strengthening Students' Independent Character at State Primary School 014/XI Pelayang Raya

Based on the findings of the observation, the researcher found that the implementation of habit formation in integrative Islamic Education (PAI) at SD Negeri 014/XI Pelayang Raya was carried out in a planned and continuous manner through various activities that integrated Islamic values into both learning activities and school culture. This habit formation was not only carried out during Islamic Education lessons but was also applied in pupils' daily activities, ensuring that values of independence were consistently instilled in the pupils.

The routine implemented begins with religious activities before lessons start, such as reciting prayers, reading the Qur'an, and memorising short surahs. In practice, the teacher gives pupils the opportunity to lead prayers and Qur'an recitation in turn, without always relying on the teacher's guidance. These activities aim to foster students' courage, sense of responsibility, and independence in carrying out religious activities. Routinely practising these habits has proven effective in fostering positive attitudes and a sense of responsibility among pupils (Putri, 2025).

In addition to religious activities, the development of independence is also fostered by assigning individual responsibilities within the Islamic Education learning process. Teachers encourage pupils to prepare their own learning materials, complete assignments without cheating, carry out their homework independently, and submit assignments by the specified deadline. Through these practices, pupils are trained to manage their learning responsibilities without relying excessively on teachers or their peers.

The research findings indicate that the majority of pupils have demonstrated an independent approach to completing learning tasks. Pupils no longer wait constantly for instructions from the teacher, but instead take the initiative to complete the tasks set according to their individual abilities. This suggests that repeated practice can shape behavioural patterns that become ingrained in pupils. This finding is consistent with research stating that habit-forming activities can improve students' ability to complete tasks independently and responsibly.

In integrated Islamic Education (PAI) lessons, the values of independence are also instilled through daily religious practices. Teachers encourage pupils to perform the Dhuha prayer, keep the school environment clean, and carry out classroom duties without needing to be constantly reminded. These activities not only develop pupils' religious aspects but also foster a sense of responsibility towards their tasks and duties.

Making it a habit to keep the classroom and school grounds clean is a tangible way of fostering independence. Each pupil is assigned a task according to a rota agreed upon collectively. Teachers act solely as facilitators and supervisors, whilst the pupils carry out the tasks independently. Through these activities, pupils learn to manage their responsibilities, work together and take responsibility for their surroundings.

Furthermore, the development of good habits in integrated Islamic Education is also achieved by fostering a culture of discipline. Teachers encourage pupils to arrive on time, wear their uniforms in accordance with the regulations, and participate in all learning activities in an orderly manner. Such discipline forms an important part of developing independent character, as pupils learn to exercise self-control and fulfil their responsibilities without being compelled to do so by others.

Based on interviews with Islamic Education teachers, the cultivation of habits is not achieved through a purely instructive approach, but places greater emphasis on continuous guidance and reinforcement. Teachers offer praise to pupils who demonstrate independent behaviour, thereby encouraging them to maintain such positive behaviour. This strategy aligns with the concept of character education, which emphasises the importance of repeating positive behaviour so that it becomes a lasting habit (Putri, 2025).

The implementation of character-building activities at SD Negeri 014/XI Pelayang Raya demonstrates that the integration of Islamic values into daily activities is capable of creating a learning environment that supports the development of students' independent character. Values such as responsibility, discipline, self-confidence and hard work are not merely taught in theory, but are put into practice directly through various school activities. This approach makes Islamic Education (PAI) more contextual and meaningful for the pupils.

The findings of this study reinforce the view that the successful development of independent character cannot be achieved through cognitive learning alone, but requires a process of consistent and sustained practice. Daily practice enables students to internalise values, so that independent character develops naturally in their everyday behaviour.

Thus, the implementation of character-building activities within integrated Islamic Education (PAI) at SD Negeri 014/XI Pelayang Raya has made a positive contribution to strengthening pupils' independent character. These activities, which include religious practices, academic responsibility, discipline, worship, and care for the school environment, have proven effective in fostering pupils who are more independent, responsible and self-confident. These results indicate that habit formation integrated with PAI learning can serve as an effective strategy in achieving the goals of character education in primary schools.

The Role of Teachers as Role Models in Integrative Islamic Education in Shaping and Strengthening Students' Independent Character at State Primary School 014/XI Pelayang Raya

Teachers' exemplary behaviour is one of the key factors in shaping and strengthening pupils' independent character. In integrated Islamic Education (PAI) lessons, teachers do not merely act as conveyors of learning material, but also as figures who set a real-life example of independence, discipline, responsibility and consistency in carrying out daily tasks. The example set by teachers has a direct positive influence on pupils' behaviour because, at primary school age, pupils tend to imitate the behaviour of adults whom they regard as role models.

The findings of the observation indicate that Islamic Education teachers always arrive on time before lessons begin. The teachers also make a habit of preparing all necessary teaching materials, dressing neatly, performing their prayers on time, and demonstrating a sense of responsibility in carrying out their school duties. Such behaviour indirectly serves as an example to pupils in cultivating independence and discipline in their daily lives.

Based on interviews with Islamic Education teachers, it was found that fostering independent character in pupils is not achieved simply by teaching material on ethics or responsibility; it must be accompanied by real-life examples that pupils can observe and emulate. The PAI teacher explained that primary school-aged children learn more easily from what they see than from what they hear. Therefore, I strive to set a direct example, such as arriving on time, preparing lessons thoroughly, performing congregational prayers with the pupils, and completing tasks with a sense of responsibility. From this, pupils begin to get used to doing the same without always needing to be told (Putri, 2025).

This statement indicates that teachers' exemplary behaviour serves as an effective means of character education, as pupils gain direct experience through observing their teachers' conduct. From an Islamic educational perspective, setting a good example (*uswah hasanah*) is a highly significant educational method, as pupils tend to emulate the behaviour of those they respect and trust.

Teachers' exemplary behaviour is also evident during the learning process. Teachers set an example by demonstrating how to approach tasks with dedication, maintain integrity whilst carrying out work, and take responsibility for the trust placed in them. In integrated Islamic Education (PAI) lessons, these values are not merely explained in theory, but are also put into practice by teachers through various school activities.

In addition, teachers encourage pupils to have the confidence to make their own decisions when completing learning tasks. When pupils encounter difficulties, teachers do not immediately provide the answers, but instead offer guidance to help them find solutions independently. This approach helps pupils develop self-confidence and the ability to solve problems independently.

The results of an interview with the Headteacher indicate that teachers setting a good example is a vital part of the character education programme implemented at the school. The Headteacher explained that he always emphasises to all teachers that character education must begin with the teachers themselves. If teachers want their pupils to be disciplined, then they must be disciplined. If teachers want their pupils to be independent, then they must also demonstrate independence in carrying out their duties and responsibilities. It is this exemplary behaviour that is the main driving force in shaping students' character (Hendri, 2025).

The headteacher's statement indicates that a culture of setting a good example has become an integral part of the education system at SD Negeri 014/XI Pelayang Raya. All teachers are encouraged to act as role models, demonstrating positive behaviour that pupils can emulate in their daily lives.

Furthermore, interviews with the Islamic Education teacher revealed that pupils began to show changes in behaviour after observing the teacher's consistent example. The teachers stated that initially, many students still needed to be reminded to bring their learning materials, complete their assignments, or keep the classroom clean. However, after consistent practice and the setting of a good example, students began to take the initiative to carry out their duties without being told (Putri, 2025).

The findings suggest that teachers' exemplary behaviour serves as a means of internalising character values. When pupils observe positive behaviour consistently demonstrated by their teachers, they come to regard such behaviour as important and worthy of adoption in their daily lives.

In the context of integrated Islamic Education, teachers' exemplary conduct is also evident in the implementation of religious activities at school. Teachers are the first to lead congregational prayers, recite the Qur'an, maintain a clean environment, and demonstrate courtesy when interacting with the school community. Through these examples, pupils learn that Islamic values are not merely to be understood as subject matter, but must be embodied in real-life behaviour.

The findings of this study are consistent with Albert Bandura's social learning theory, which states that individuals learn through the process of observing and imitating the behaviour of role models they consider important. In the school environment, teachers are the primary role models who influence the formation of pupils' attitudes and behaviour. Therefore, the better the example set by teachers, the greater the likelihood of positive character development in pupils.

The findings of this study also support Kusumawardani's conclusion that teachers setting a good example is one of the most effective strategies in character education, as it provides concrete examples that pupils can observe directly. Consistently setting a good example will foster a school culture that supports the development of independence, discipline and responsibility.

Based on the research findings, it can be understood that teachers' exemplary behaviour in integrative Islamic Education (PAI) at SD Negeri 014/XI Pelayang Raya is manifested through discipline, responsibility, independence, honesty, and a commitment to upholding Islamic values in daily life. This exemplary behaviour has a positive influence on the development of students' independent character, as demonstrated by their improved ability to complete tasks independently, make responsible decisions, carry out duties without being told, and possess self-confidence in various school activities.

It can therefore be concluded that teachers' exemplary behaviour is a key strategy in integrative Islamic Education (PAI) teaching, playing a vital role in shaping and strengthening pupils' independent character. The success of fostering independent character is determined not only by the subject matter taught, but also by the teacher's consistency in setting an example for pupils in their daily lives.

Supporting and Hindering Factors in Fostering Students' Independent Character through Habituation and Role Modelling in Integrated Islamic Education at State Primary School 014/XI Pelayang Raya

The success of fostering students' independent character through habit formation and role modelling in integrated Islamic Education is influenced by various supporting and hindering factors. These factors stem from the school environment, teachers, families, and the students' own characteristics. The presence of supporting factors serves as a vital asset in the implementation of character education, whilst hindering factors present challenges that must be overcome so that the objective of fostering independent character can be achieved to the fullest extent.

a. Factors that support the development of students' independent character

The research findings indicate that one of the key contributing factors is the school's commitment to implementing character education through a school culture based on Islamic values. Habit-forming programmes such as reciting prayers before and after lessons, reciting the Qur'an, praying in congregation, charitable giving, classroom duty, and maintaining a clean environment are effective means of instilling values of independence in pupils.

Based on the results of an interview with the Headteacher, it was found that the school consistently supports the implementation of character education through various school policies and activities. The Headteacher stated that, from the outset, the school has sought to make character education an integral part of the school culture. All teachers have been given the responsibility to integrate character values into their teaching, including the value of independence. The daily habit-forming programme serves as a vital tool for fostering students' sense of

This statement indicates that the school's policy support is a key factor in the successful implementation of independent character building. A supportive school environment enables pupils to gain real-life experience in applying the character values they have learnt.

Another contributing factor is the consistent example set by teachers. Teachers do not merely teach the values of independence in theory, but also demonstrate behaviour that pupils can emulate. Teachers' discipline, sense of responsibility, hard work and commitment to their duties have a positive influence on pupils' character development.

In an interview, the Islamic Education teacher explained that teachers strive to set an example for their pupils in various areas, ranging from punctuality and a sense of responsibility towards their duties to religious practices. When pupils see their teachers consistently doing something well, they are encouraged to follow their example (Putri, 2025).

In addition to the example set by teachers, another key factor is the cooperation between schools and parents. Most parents support the habit-forming programmes implemented by the school by guiding their children to carry out similar activities at home, such as praying on time, studying independently, and taking responsibility for household chores. The synergy between education at school and at home helps to reinforce the internalisation of character values in pupils.

Another contributing factor is the students' intrinsic motivation. Observations indicate that some students are aware of the need to carry out their tasks and responsibilities without always needing to be reminded by the teacher. This awareness has developed through continuous practice, so that the values of independence have become part of the students' everyday behaviour.

b. Factors hindering the development of students' independent character

In addition to various supporting factors, this study also identified several inhibiting factors in fostering students' independent character through habit formation and role modelling in integrated Islamic Education (PAI) lessons.

One of the most significant barriers is the difference in family backgrounds and parenting styles. Not all pupils are brought up in the same way at home as they are at school. Some parents still tend to help with, or even do, their children's homework, thereby reducing the children's opportunities to learn independently.

As the Islamic Education teacher pointed out, pupils are sometimes encouraged to be independent at school, but at home they receive too much help from their parents. Consequently, the independent habits developed at school do not always carry over into the family environment (Putri, 2025).

This statement suggests that discrepancies in the approaches to guidance between schools and families can act as a barrier to the development of students' independent character.

Another hindering factor is the impact of technological advancements and excessive use of mobile devices. Based on the interview findings, teachers revealed that some pupils spend more time playing digital games or using social media than engaging in activities that foster responsibility and independence.

The Islamic Education teacher explained that the biggest challenge at present is excessive mobile phone use. Some pupils are finding it harder to concentrate on their studies and tend to look for quick fixes when doing their homework because they have become accustomed to relying on technology (Putri, 2025).

Furthermore, the diverse characteristics of pupils also present a challenge in the implementation of character education. Not all pupils possess the same level of maturity, motivation and adaptability. Some pupils need more time to adjust to the various routines implemented by the school.

The headteacher pointed out that every child has a different personality. Some pupils adapt quickly, whilst others require more intensive support. Teachers must therefore be patient and consistent in providing guidance (Hendri, 2025).

Limited teaching time is also a major obstacle. Teachers must strike a balance between meeting curriculum targets and delivering character education. This situation sometimes means that character development cannot be fully integrated into every learning activity.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that the development of students' independent character at SD Negeri 014/XI Pelayang Raya is achieved through the cultivation of habits and the setting of a good example, which are integrated into Islamic Education lessons. Habit formation is realised through various religious activities and daily responsibilities, such as praying, reciting the Qur'an, praying in congregation, classroom duty, maintaining environmental cleanliness, and completing tasks independently. Meanwhile, teachers' role modelling is demonstrated through discipline, responsibility, independence, and consistency in upholding Islamic values, which serve as an example for students. The success of fostering independent character is supported by the school's commitment, a religious school culture, teachers' exemplary behaviour, a continuous habit-forming programme, parental cooperation, and student motivation. However, its implementation still faces several obstacles, such as differences in family upbringing, the influence of excessive gadget use, variations in student characteristics, and limited learning time. Despite these various challenges, habit formation and exemplary behaviour within integrated Islamic Education (PAI) lessons have proven effective in fostering independence, discipline, responsibility, and self-confidence in pupils, making it an effective strategy for supporting the development of independent character within the primary school environment.

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